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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

**REALIST THEORY AND RUSSIAN ALLIANCE  
BEHAVIOR: IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. FOREIGN  
POLICY**

by

Timothy Mark Sullivan

December 2000

Thesis Advisor:  
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**REALIST THEORY AND RUSSIAN ALLIANCE BEHAVIOR:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis develops multipolar and bipolar propositions for alliance formation, validates these propositions using Russian alliance case studies, and applies these propositions to the post-Cold War international system. Realist theory explains Russian alliance behavior in multipolar (Hitler-Stalin Pact) and bipolar (Warsaw Pact) international systems. In the Hitler-Stalin Pact, domestic influences dominate multipolar alliance selection. In the Warsaw Pact, the emergence of superpower struggle illustrates how structure determines alliance behavior in a bipolar system. In the post-Cold War system, evidence concerning Sino-Russian rapprochement supported a unipolar moment: overwhelming U.S. power allows U.S. action to be dictated by domestic factors while lesser power behavior (i.e., China and Russia) responds to structural stimuli.

This thesis demonstrates that realist theory remains a powerful methodology for understanding alliances because Russia behaved as predicted by realist propositions. In the post-Cold War system, when micro-decisions in the United States have global effects, current behavior by emerging powers corresponds to realist predictions. Since the United States cannot wholly distance itself from its domestic, valued-based interests, U.S. foreign policy architects must recognize potential adversaries are more intent on security and regime survival than the advancement of individual rights and democratic freedoms that often seem to shape U.S. international behavior.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis uses alliance theory to examine Russian foreign policy behavior and to address four critical questions emerging in the current international system: what is the polarity of the current system; who are the potential major powers; how will Russia behave; and what approach to international relations should the United States adopt? It develops multipolar and bipolar propositions for alliance formation, validates these propositions with evidence of Russian alliance behavior, and applies these propositions to the current international system. This process tests the utility of realist theory in the post-Cold War environment and offers insight into Russia's current and future foreign policy.

An examination of the Hitler-Stalin Pact and the Warsaw Pact confirms multipolar and bipolar behavior in Soviet alliance formation. In the multipolar Hitler-Stalin Pact, the domestic influence of unit attributes and alliance handicaps dominated alliance selection. In the bipolar Warsaw Pact, the emergence of superpower struggle and the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact illustrate how structure determines alliance behavior in a bipolar system. Examining these multipolar and bipolar alliance patterns with evidence concerning a potential strategic partnership between China and Russia demonstrates that neither the bipolar (structure driven) nor multipolar (domestic driven) concept of alliance and alignment behavior applies today. Instead, the evidence supports the judgment that a unipolar moment is at hand: Overwhelming U.S. power creates an international system where U.S. action is dictated by domestic factors while lesser power behavior (China and Russia, for example) responds to structural stimuli.

This thesis demonstrates that realist theory remains a powerful, accurate methodology for understanding the behavior of states. Russia behaved as predicted by

realist-based proscriptions for alliance formation. Moreover, current rhetoric and behavior from emerging powers like Russia, China, India, and Japan all subscribe to realist perspectives. At a minimum, since the United States cannot wholly distance itself from its domestic, valued-based interests, U.S. foreign policy architects must recognize potential adversaries are more intent on security and regime survival than on the advancement of individual rights and democratic freedoms. In the current unipolar moment, when micro-decisions in the United States have global effects, challenges facing the United States are great. It is imperative new U.S. initiatives (like North Atlantic Treaty Organization expansion, National Missile Defense development) are pursued with full understanding of the likely response from regional powers. Deployment of Theatre Missile Defense in East Asia will spawn further Sino-Russian arms cooperation and expenditures while additional NATO expansion will likely encourage further cooperation between Russia, China, India, Iran, and other potential powers capable of exerting influence in the European periphery. Since the unipolar moment will inevitably succumb to multipolarity, equitable and tempered bilateral initiatives with rising powers ought to replace the current U.S. tendency to codify its domestic, valued based interests in spite of the geo-strategic consequences. The sooner the United States recognizes it will soon be one of many powers, the sooner it can engage in constructive initiatives with future adversaries to pre-empt the catastrophic effects produced by a spiraling security dilemma.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## I. POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### A. INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union sent ripples through the international system that have yet to settle. A "New World Order" is developing as leaders and scholars attempt to identify its characteristics. Over the past decade, these changes have spawned four foreign policy questions. First, how can the polarity of the global system best be described? Second, which countries seem likely to be major players on the international stage as a result of the changing environment? Third, how will Russia act and interact in this new environment? Fourth, what role should the United States play in this "New World Order" in light of the system's changing polarity?

Characterizations (i.e., the number of great powers) of today's international system's polarity have differed widely. It has been described as unipolar, bipolar, multipolar, or some combination of all three systems. Henry Kissinger argues the new multipolar environment will be "more like the European state system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than the rigid patterns of the Cold War."<sup>1</sup> He suggests that power diffusion on a global scale has offset the unipolar moment that immediately followed the Cold War.<sup>2</sup> Alternately, citing the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of Germany, Glenn Snyder reasons that although current bipolar tendencies may persist,

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 809.

informal realignment and ambiguous threat perceptions will cause multipolar characteristics to predominate.<sup>3</sup> Samuel Huntington's image of current international alignment places the United States above a multitude of peer competitors in a uni-multipolar system that will evolve into a multipolar arrangement as a result of regional powers' challenges to American hegemony.<sup>4</sup> *The Economist* points out that world order typically "emerges from the interplay of three, four or five powers which create shifting patterns of alliances and enmities among themselves" and that for the past few centuries, excluding the Cold War, this type of order dominated in Europe and Asia.<sup>5</sup> Although opinions vary, most scholars and journalists suggest that some type of multipolar arrangement will emerge in the future.

If the international system is growing increasingly multipolar, which countries are identified as major powers and peer competitors? Again, arguments vary, but a core list of likely nations is emerging. *The Economist* identifies four definite powers—Europe, Russia, China, and the United States—and makes allowances for two possible additions, including Japan and a Muslim center of influence.<sup>6</sup> Samuel Huntington alternately identifies a new order of power divided along major civilizations, listing Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and possibly

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<sup>3</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neo-realist First Cut," *International Organization* 45, No. 1 (1991): 102.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," *Foreign Affairs* 78, No. 2 (March/April 1999): 37.

<sup>5</sup> "The New World Order: Back to the Future," *The Economist*, 8 January 1994, reprinted in *Strategy and Force Planning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Richard M. Lloyd and others, ed. (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1997), 321.

<sup>6</sup> "The New World Order: Back to the Future," 321.



African,<sup>7</sup> and a uni-multipolar system of regional powers challenging American supremacy. In his uni-multipolar model, Huntington identifies a German-French condominium, Russia, China, Japan, India, Iran, Brazil, and South Africa as second-tier, regional powers and the United States as the unipolar force.<sup>8</sup> Richard Haas adds Pakistan, Iraq and North Korea to the countries mentioned by Huntington as regional forces,<sup>9</sup> while Kissinger focuses on six major players including the United States, Europe, China, Japan, Russia, and India. Anywhere from four to seven countries may dominate the international system, and a host of second tier countries also may influence regional politics.

As a major power, how will Russia behave in a multipolar environment when and if its internal domestic situation stabilizes and it regains significant state strength? Russia still maintains the second largest nuclear arsenal in the world. After five decades of enmity with the United States, the role Russia plays on the international stage is critical, especially due to its geographic position between Europe and China. Kissinger, for instance, notes that "Russia will always be essential to world order," and wonders, "by what principles and methods will it react to the upheavals around its borders, especially in the volatile Middle East?"<sup>10</sup> The collapse of empires generates two conflicting trends,

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<sup>7</sup> Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, No. 3 (Summer 1993), reprinted in *Strategy and Force Planning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, Richard M. Lloyd and others, ed. (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1997), 346.

<sup>8</sup> Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," 36.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Haas, "What to Do With American Primacy," *Foreign Affairs* 78, No. 5 (September/October 1999): 42.

<sup>10</sup> Kissinger., 25.

according to Kissinger, including the attempt by periphery states to take advantage of the weakened imperial power and efforts by the declining power to restore its authority in the periphery. Both phenomena are occurring around the borders of the Former Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup>

Given this emerging multipolarity and the potential for Russia to affect world events, what approach to international relations should the United States adopt? Arguments differ from a liberally inspired policy of engagement and collective security to a realist motivated balance of power position. Huntington straddles the intellectual divide between realism and liberalism and urges the United States not to act in a unipolar (i.e., hegemonic) manner. Rather, he encourages the United States to seek cooperation with some major powers while balancing national interests against others, taking advantage of its cultural affinity with some countries while employing a Bismarckian balance posturing otherwise.<sup>12</sup>

Liberalists, who describe an international system supported by norms, principles, rules, and conventions, adopt a broader perspective of the influences, functions, and roles of the international system than realists do.<sup>13</sup> Richard Haas, illustrating the dominant liberal mindset, argues the “proper goal for American foreign policy, then, is to

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 814.

<sup>12</sup> Huntington, “The Lonely Superpower,” 47-48.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew L. Ross, “The Theory and Practice of International Relations: Contending Analytical Perspectives,” In *Strategy and Force Planning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, Richard M. Lloyd and others, ed. (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1997), 51-54.

encourage a multipolarity characterized by cooperation and concert rather than competition and conflict.”<sup>14</sup>

Realists, by contrast, encourage the employment of balance of power strategies to protect national interests. Centered on an anarchic world system composed of unitary, rational states concerned with war and peace, realists focus on the competitive interaction of states.<sup>15</sup> Kissinger argues that without two rival powers, large nations do not perceive threats to peace, or their national interests, in the same way, and therefore collective security is more difficult to promote.<sup>16</sup> The *raison d’etat* and *Realpolitik* of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, of which the United States was not a major participant, offers the most insight for the construction of foreign policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, according to Kissinger.<sup>17</sup> Although arguments exist for liberal and realist stances, an examination of a realist based, balance of power theory is important because a similar approach may be adopted by emerging powers.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTION**

This thesis uses alliance theory to examine Russian foreign policy behavior and to address the four questions posed earlier in the introduction: what is the polarity of the international system; what are the potential major powers; how will Russia behave; and what approach to international relations should the United States adopt? This thesis will

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<sup>14</sup> Haas, “What to Do With American Primacy,” 38.

<sup>15</sup> Ross, “The Theory and Practice of International Relations: Contending Analytical Perspectives,” 48-49.

<sup>16</sup> Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 809.

apply realist theory outlined in Glenn Snyder's book *Alliance Politics* to the international system to explore past Russian alliance behavior and attempt to predict Russian patterns of alignment in the emerging international system. Applying this theory from 1921 through 2000 provides insight into alliance theory itself, Russian alliance behavior, possible U.S. foreign policy alternatives, and the polarity and power composition of the international system.

### C. IMPORTANCE

This research question allows the application of Snyder's theory, developed to address alliance formation in a multipolar system prior to 1914, to alternate time periods of both similar and dissimilar polarity. This research provides an opportunity to assess the utility of alliance theory because scholarly work addressing alliance theory is limited. Does Snyder's theory provide insight to the multipolar inter-war years and the bipolar Cold War? Do the alignments and alliances of nations over the last decade conform to Snyder's multipolar theory? Or are alliances still being conducted by bipolar variations that Snyder offers? If the world does not conform to either bipolar or multipolar models, does the empirical evidence lead to a new model of alliance behavior? This thesis can also draw conclusions about whether or not Russian alliance behavior will be described accurately on a systemic level by examining a number of Russian alliance case studies. Is Russian foreign policy driven by rational, unitary calculations or do other mitigating factors, including domestic, cognitive, and political variables weigh more heavily on

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 810.

decision making? This thesis also will employ the leading realist theory of alliance behavior to offer insights into possible courses of U.S. foreign policy.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY AND DATA**

This thesis surveys the available literature on alliance making and formulates a model of alliance formation in multipolar and bipolar international systems. Chapter II will draw heavily from Glenn Snyder's discussion of case studies from 1879 to 1914 to create a theoretical foundation of alliance formation, focusing primarily on the Franco-Russian alliance (multipolar system, Czarist Russia). This theory will then be tested against case studies involving different domestic regimes and system polarity from later time periods. Chapter III will investigate 1921-1939 (multipolar system, Soviet Union) by focusing on the Hitler-Stalin Pact, and Chapter IV will examine 1945-1989 (bipolar system, Soviet Union) by researching the formation of the Warsaw Pact. The empirical evidence in Chapter III and IV will be drawn from secondary sources. Chapter V will test whether or not Russia is behaving as theorized in a multipolar system by focusing on Russian rapprochement with China since 1989 (multipolar system, Russian Federation). This final case study will draw heavily on the primary sources available electronically and through translation services such as the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Chapter VI will offer a conclusion.

#### **E. LIMITATIONS**

Because this thesis addresses a broad historical period, a significant number of limitations to the research are inevitable. First, the scope of the research question will only permit the evaluation of alliance formation, omitting Snyder's discussion of alliance

management. Although the dynamics of alliance maintenance are not discussed, understanding alliance formation is critical to the broader question at hand: This thesis is more concerned with Russian alliance selection and less interested in the subsequent maintenance of those alliances. Second, the scope of this research topic only permits the in-depth evaluation of one alliance case study per time period, although comparisons will be made with other pertinent cases, and every effort will be made to select the most illustrative case study. Finally, the evidence to support the case studies in Chapter III and IV will come from secondary sources due to research time and paper length limitations. The theoretical alliance models offered, however, are supported by the vast amount of historical research available on each alliance in question.

## II. ALLIANCE FORMATION THEORY

### A. INTRODUCTION

In his book *Alliance Politics* Glenn Snyder outlines a realist theory of alliance formation. Snyder addresses the central elements of alliance formation that are shaped by the structure of the international system.<sup>18</sup> Snyder argues that the global political environment is likely to become more multipolar in the future, and that a comprehensive alliance theory will be pertinent.<sup>19</sup> The fall of the Soviet Union and the re-emergence of a unified Germany, according to Snyder, gave the international system a more multipolar composition.<sup>20</sup>

This chapter provides a summary of Glenn Snyder's realist theory on alliance formation in multipolar and bipolar international systems. It draws primarily from two of Snyder's works on the subject, his book *Alliance Politics* and his article "Alliance Theory: A Neo-realist First Cut." Both Snyder's theoretical writing and his evaluation of numerous alliances formed prior to World War I provide the foundation for a realist theory of alliance formation. This chapter offers critical definitions, assumptions, and concepts essential to system theory. It also discusses the structure of the international system. The final section will outline alliance formation in multipolar and bipolar environments, offering testable propositions.

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<sup>18</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 2.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neo-realist First Cut," 101.

Snyder defines alliances as “formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership.”<sup>21</sup> This narrow definition of alliance separates general alignments or agreements based on common interests that require little or no mutual commitment from purposeful pacts with military or security agendas. Alliances are primarily an instrument of national security policy. Snyder defines security narrowly as “a high confidence of preserving, against external military attack, values presently held.”<sup>22</sup> Snyder also defines the broader and more fundamental term, alignment, as “expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions.”<sup>23</sup> Therefore, although states may align with or against another state, they may not necessarily engage in an alliance with one another. These narrow definitions serve to limit the scope of his alliance theory; it does not address associations like OPEC with economic purposes or non-military threats like environmental degradation or the drug trade.

Snyder makes a number of assumptions about the nature of states and the international system. First, he assumes statesmen are rational and able to choose means consistent with their security ends. Second, he assumes that leaders are primarily motivated by state survival. Third, his theory addresses alliances of military purposes only. Fourth, he assumes a unitary state and resolves to discuss internal political

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<sup>21</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 4.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.



influences only when they affect the case studies he chooses. Finally, he focuses on defensive alliances among great powers.<sup>24</sup>

## **B. THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

The systemic context of alliances “may be described in terms of four analytical entities: structure, relationships, interaction, and units,” where system structure and units provide external and internal impetus to the relationships and interaction among states.<sup>25</sup>

The anarchical system is fraught with insecurity and subject to the “security dilemma.” The state of anarchy and uncertainty about the actions and intentions of other states motivates governments to undertake efforts to increase their own security, which in turn instigates comparable actions by other nations. In alliance behavior, a defensive alliance by two nations may be perceived as offensive by a third, prompting it to either increase armaments or seek a fourth nation to ally with to improve national security. As a result, anarchy and the security dilemma cause states to seek instinctively balance of power equilibrium in the same unintended way economic competition leads to equilibrium in price.<sup>26</sup> These purely structural tendencies to ally will create patterns of enmity and amity, generate new state interests and expectations, and eliminate the uncertainty surrounding collective goods.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 54.

In addition to anarchy, the second critical component of the international structure is polarity. In a multipolar system, who allies with whom is structurally indeterminate as each state is logically permitted to ally with any other state. In a bipolar arrangement, the superpowers' relationship is inevitably adversarial because system structure largely determines the selection of alliances. For the lesser powers, their relationship to each superpower is structurally based on geographic proximity, resources, finances, coercion, and threat perceptions, affecting their alignment alternatives and selection.<sup>28</sup>

Within this structure of anarchy and polarity emerge both relationships and interaction between states with particular, individual attributes. Alliance handicaps that potentially affect relationships include domestic ideology, perceptions, politics, leadership, and significant events. For Snyder, relationships and interaction are distinct; relationships are the situational context between states based on system structure and unit attributes whereas interaction is behavior between units, including communication or physical actions that affects others.<sup>29</sup>

Relationships entail alignments and alliances, common and conflicting interests, relative capabilities, and interdependence. These relationships are not structural but have a quasi-structural affect by identifying friend and foe more clearly and mitigating some uncertainty in the international system.<sup>30</sup> States' relationships involve conflicting and common strategic and intrinsic interests that may be further classified as general or

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 20-21, 131.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 21-22.

particular.<sup>31</sup> In discussing capability, Snyder makes clear that “power resources” are the aggregate of actual and potential military assets, while “capability” is necessarily defined in a “dyadic relationship” between two nations.<sup>32</sup> Also critical to relationships is alliance dependence, a function of a state’s perceived threat from adversaries and the availability and attractiveness of other alliance alternatives. The more threatened a nation feels and the less alliance alternatives it perceives, the more dependent it will be on its current alliance arrangements.<sup>33</sup> The aggregation of alignment tendencies constitutes a “pattern of alignment” that heavily influences alliance decisions, which are merely an explicit agreement to validate a shared alignment with a military treaty.<sup>34</sup>

Structure and unit attributes determine relationships that influence the interaction between states. This cooperative or conflicting interaction is the principal dependent variable in Snyder’s theory and potentially includes preparation for war, diplomacy, and military action.<sup>35</sup> The formation of military alliances, which this thesis is most concerned with, constitutes diplomatic action that increases security in lieu of an arms race, military action, or conflict resolution.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 33.

### C. ALLIANCE FORMATION

States ally if the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. Benefits include deterring attack on oneself and ones ally, improving capability for defense, precluding an alliance by the ally with an adversary, and eliminating possible attack by the ally.<sup>36</sup> The principle costs are the risk of having to aid the ally, risk of entrapment in a more confident ally's war, risk of a counter-alliance, foreclosure of alliance options, and general constraints on freedom of action.<sup>37</sup> Costs and benefits are inherent in every alliance agreement and are a function of both structure and relations between states. States with more common interests incur lower alliance costs and achieve greater benefit from a perceived increase in strength.<sup>38</sup>

The Franco-Russian alliance formalized in January 1894 provides an illustration of the costs and benefits associated with alliances. Both countries gained deterrent value against Germany, party to the Austro-German alliance of 1879 and the Triple Alliance of 1881, through an explicit threat of a two front war. Concurrently, Russia gained deterrence towards Great Britain whom it competed with in the Far East. The particular details of the treaty concerning mobilization or attack by members of the Triple Alliance provided significant defensive value for France, who benefited from the specific commitment of Russian troops towards a two front war. Also, France gained the preclusive benefit of making the renewal of a Three Emperor's League or Reinsurance

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<sup>36</sup> Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neo-Realist First Cut," 90.

<sup>37</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 43-44.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

Treaty highly unlikely for Russia. In terms of cost, Russia incurred a higher commitment to defend France in its conflict with Germany over Alsace-Lorraine, France suffered from potential entrapment in Austro-Russian conflict in the Balkans, and both nations lost diplomatic flexibility and risked provoking German arms or alliance reactions.<sup>39</sup>

Evaluating the costs and benefits of a particular alliance and the incentives to ally further involves examining systemic influences, strength relationships, common and conflicting interests, and internal, unit factors encouraging alliance formation.<sup>40</sup> The following examples demonstrate how relationships between nations affect alliance selection and formation.

Pressures of anarchy and polarity originating in the international system influenced alliances prior to World War I. Threatening international conditions created preclusive interests for Germany and Austria to ally to prevent one another from selecting alternative partners, Germany to prevent Austria's alliance with France or Russia, and Austria to prevent a German-Russian move to partition its territory. Similarly, Russia's entrance into the Three Emperors' Alliance discouraged Great Britain from pursuing an agreement with Germany or Austria.<sup>41</sup>

Strength differences in the relations between nations also affect their interaction in alliance formation. Germany sought to control the weaker Austria, an ally it could

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 123-124.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 130-131.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 133, 135.

dominate, in crafting the Austro-German alliance.<sup>42</sup> Two years later, Austria's military weakness and loss of Great Britain as a potential ally severely limited its bargaining power with Germany and Russia in the formation of the Three Emperor's League.<sup>43</sup> These inherent strength differences translate into differing payoff levels in alliance formation: each state involved stands to gain benefits and incur costs that are a function of the deterrence, defensive, and preclusive values of the alliance.<sup>44</sup>

Competing and common interests also affect the selection of allies. Austria's specific interest in gaining support for its conflict with Russia and Germany's general interest in preserving the Austro-Hungarian state influenced the Austro-German agreement.<sup>45</sup> The desire for Monarchical solidarity and alliances with like-minded states provided impetus towards the Three Emperors' League.<sup>46</sup> Finally, Russia and France were able to overcome differing intrinsic and particular interests in support of their broader structural need to balance power and prevent one another from allying with the Triple Alliance.<sup>47</sup> When competing and common interests are examined, the alliance members' relative payoff values change according to the patterns of alignment and predictability of partners these interests create.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 56-59.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 60-62.

Domestic handicaps can influence ally selection as well. Otto von Bismarck's ongoing feud with Russian chancellor Alexander Gorchakov and the impending resignation of the pro-German Austrian foreign minister provided significant reason for Bismarck to conclude an alliance with Austria. Domestic political power transfer from a Tory to Liberal government in 1894 gave Bismarck further reason to doubt British reliance in any future alliance. Finally, Bismarck's diplomatic skill kept Russia tied to Germany for nine years while France remained isolated, outweighing the general systemic forces pushing Russia and France together to balance power. When Bismarck was forced to resign in 1890, the need to balance power overwhelmed domestic hurdles to a Franco-Russian alliance. The Franco-Russian alliance is an example of predominate systemic forces pushing states to ally "on the wrong side" prior to World War I; Britain and Russia, with significant colonial disputes between them, allied against Germany, with whom neither state had particular claims.<sup>49</sup>

In summary, alliance formation in a multipolar system is a function of the costs and benefits of alliances according to the incentives to ally in an anarchic system, the quasi-structural influence of common and competing interests and state strength, and unit level domestic influences. Several propositions follow from the discussion of multipolar systems:

- In a multipolar system, alliances are based on unit level attributes.
- In a multipolar system, alliance handicaps are ultimately overcome by structurally induced factors.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 134-142.

- In a multipolar system, the consecutive selection of alliances incrementally moves towards two coalitions of equal strength.

#### **D. BIPOLAR ALLIANCES**

Although Snyder does not put forward a comprehensive theory of alliance formation in a bipolar world, he outlines some general comparisons to the multipolar environment. First, alliances will be larger in a bipolar world because there is little value in creating more than two separate blocks of alignment centered on the two superpowers.<sup>50</sup>

Second, alignment is rigid and policy is flexible in a bipolar system, allowing alliances to persist for a long duration, in contrast to the multipolar world when alliance alternatives, fear of abandonment, and unreliability of ally commitment demand rigid policy and flexible alignment. In a bipolar world, the relative certainty of alliance composition and commitment permits more flexible national policy since the fear of abandonment is less prevalent.<sup>51</sup>

Third, structure dominates alliance handicaps, including domestic, cognitive, and political factors, in bipolar alliances. Strategic interests in bipolar arrangements, dictated by the relative power and position of the two superpowers, are clearer and more stable than multipolar systems.<sup>52</sup> Clearer strategic interests determine alliances in a bipolar

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 17-19.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 19, 26.



system that will have less subsequent effect on the relations between states.<sup>53</sup> It is marked by “pure coordination” rather than bargaining, and it involves solving structural problems more than accommodating particular interests or domestic desires.<sup>54</sup> The following propositions are offered for bipolar systems:

- In a bipolar system, alliances are based on structural factors.
- In a bipolar system, alliances are determined by superpower interests, not lesser-power interests, and codified based on geography, coercion, resources, and finance.

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<sup>53</sup> Snyder, “Alliance Theory: A Neo-realist First Cut,” 97.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

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### **III. HITLER-STALIN PACT**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter applies realist theory of alliance behavior to the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 to evaluate the propositions about state behavior in a multipolar setting developed in the previous chapter. The first section discusses critical alliance developments between 1921 and 1939 affecting the structure of the international system and the relations between states. Next, the three multipolar propositions will be tested against the evidence presented on the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about whether or not Soviet alliance behavior conformed to the theoretical predictions for a multipolar international system.

#### **B. ALLIANCE DEVELOPMENTS: 1921-1939**

The participants at the Versailles conference, unlike the powers present in Vienna a century earlier, were short on compromise and long on demand, experiencing disunity among their ranks.<sup>55</sup> Although an international relations approach that could “banish the scourge of war” served as the impetus behind the proposed League, for the major powers it proved “unrealistic to assume their policies...would reflect anything other than their own governments conception of what their respective national interests required.”<sup>56</sup> Before long, European political order “took on the appearance of an unstable system.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 222-229.

<sup>56</sup> William M Keylor, *The Twentieth Century World: An International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 72-76.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

## 1. Post-Versailles International System

The relations between powers immediately following WWI were shaped by strength inequalities and common and competing interests. Despite their wartime alliance, Great Britain, seeking equilibrium on the continent in pursuit of its naval interests, feared a resurgent France, not Germany. To the British, a secure, stable Germany would serve European balance well. The United States became politically and militarily detached from continental affairs, failing to ratify the Versailles Treaty and withdrawing its forces from the Rhineland in 1923, while engaging Europe economically. France stood isolated and vulnerable due to the destruction of the war and conflicts with Great Britain over reparations, protection of the Rhineland, and competing interests in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. France sought to develop alliances in Eastern Europe to offset German threats because the ideologically unattractive Soviets exited WWI early and contested pre-war loans with the French. As a result of the East European territorial buffer between Germany and Russia, German revisionism could only be challenged by a peaceful coalition of the United States, Great Britain, and France.<sup>58</sup>

Domestically, a weak and isolated Russia emerged from its civil war to face grim geopolitical realities. The struggle to retain territory during the civil war occurred in the name of the "fatherland," not revolution, and after 1920 the dream of "sweeping European revolution" withered.<sup>59</sup> Diplomatic relations with Estonia in February 1920

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 83-112.

<sup>59</sup> Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-73*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1974), 76-77.

marked "the beginning of normalcy and diplomatic coexistence," opening "regular channels of communication with the world."<sup>60</sup> Soviet Russia's record of diplomacy between 1918 and 1921 was marked by "flexibility and reasonableness" accepting "the realities of the world situation."<sup>61</sup>

## **2. Re-emergence of *Realpolitik*: 1921-1933**

The politically ostracized Germans and Soviets looked to cooperate while France sought to develop ties to Eastern Europe in the 1920's. The Franco-Polish military alliance of February 1921 satisfied France's strategic need for eastern allies and Poland's particular interest in protecting Upper Silesia, which contained large coal reserves.<sup>62</sup> The Rapallo Treaty of 1922 implemented diplomatic and economic relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R., committing the two nations to assist each other's recovery and allowing military collaboration essential to Germany's clandestine rearmament.<sup>63</sup> Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann of Germany successfully co-opted Europe's western powers in German revisionism when The Locarno Treaty was signed in 1925 between Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, France, and Italy guaranteeing territorial status quo among the signatories and providing for the demilitarization of the Rhineland.<sup>64</sup> Although Germany entered the League of Nations in September 1926, Locarno actually

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>62</sup> Keylor, 109.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 113-115.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 116-117.

weakened collective security, since critical issues thereafter were resolved among Europe's four great powers. It also intensified France's security dilemma by endorsing allied withdrawal from the Rhineland.<sup>65</sup> Locarno further marked the loss of true German-Soviet cooperation against the West despite the re-affirmation of the Rapallo Agreement through the Treaty of Berlin in 1926 and 1933.<sup>66</sup> Finally, despite approaching the Little Entente and the Balkan Block in 1926 and 1927 to provide an eastern check against German power, France began constructing the Maginot Line before 1930 undermining any security assistance it could offer Eastern Europe.<sup>67</sup>

The U.S. economic crash of 1929 directly affected Germany because of the strong economic ties it maintained with the United States as a result of the Dawes Plan of 1924.<sup>68</sup> The crash had deleterious effects on European economies, ushering in protectionist and nationalistic measures and undermining the tenuous political and military stability in Europe reliant on international trade and debt servicing. Adolf Hitler capitalized on these sentiments in Germany, coming to power in January 1933 following three years of increased support for the Nazi party.<sup>69</sup>

In the U.S.S.R., Stalin's *realpolitik* was unaccompanied by any ideological compunctions.<sup>70</sup> A dramatic shift in Soviet thought occurred between 1918, when the

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 118-122.

<sup>66</sup> Ulam, 158.

<sup>67</sup> Keylor, 110.

<sup>68</sup> Ulam, , 124.

<sup>69</sup> Keylor, 127-131.

<sup>70</sup> Ulam, 144.

Soviets existed to promote the interests of the world revolution and 1928, when the Communists believed that the world revolutionary movement existed to promote the interests of the U.S.S.R.<sup>71</sup> Following Hitler's rise to power, German-Soviet relations cooled while the Soviets realized that their dream of major war between rival imperialist, capitalistic camps did not match the current international system's reality. The Soviets sought to build ties with Western institutions they had challenged since 1921.<sup>72</sup>

### **3. Hitler and the Rise of Germany: 1933-1939**

The rise of Hitler's Germany occurred as collective security became ineffective. Because the League could not accommodate the interests of the major players, it failed to respond vigorously to aggression in the Italo-Abyssinian crisis, the Spanish Civil War, or the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.<sup>73</sup> In addition, democracy suffered as no fewer than 14 nations in Europe became authoritarian by the end of the 1930's.<sup>74</sup> In 1933, the balance of power in Europe changed as Hitler dissolved the Reichstag, withdrew from the disarmament conference, and abandoned the League of Nations.<sup>75</sup> The Soviets responded to Germany's threatening posture by signing a flurry of non-aggression pacts

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 203-207.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 200-222.

<sup>74</sup> Hermann Kinder and Werner Hilgemann, *The Anchor Atlas of World History, Vol. II*, (New York: Doubleday, 1978): 138-139.

<sup>75</sup> Keylor, 141.

with Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Poland in an attempt to lower the level of international tension.<sup>76</sup>

The German-Polish Non-aggression Pact of January 1934 drastically reversed German policy and threatened the French alliance system, inaugurating a diplomatic flurry in Europe.<sup>77</sup> As a result, the Soviet attitude towards Poland became more reserved while the chance of rapprochement with France increased.<sup>78</sup> The Franco-Soviet Pact of 1935 provided for mutual assistance between the two nations but lacked military provisions for increased security in light of Poland's refusal to permit passage of Soviet troops through its territory.<sup>79</sup>

After Germany revealed the existence of its air force and reintroduced military conscription with a manpower goal of 36 divisions (as opposed to the 7 divisions permitted under the Treaty of Versailles), Great Britain, France and Italy coordinated their policies at the Stresa conference in 1935 and sternly condemned the German action, threatening joint opposition to further treaty violations. Stresa, the Franco-Russian agreement, Franco-Italian military talks, and ties to Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia gave France its strongest anti-German coalition since the end of WWI. This stern condemnation was quickly undermined, however, when Great Britain

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<sup>76</sup> Hermann Kinder and Werner Hilgemann, 196.

<sup>77</sup> Keylor., 142.

<sup>78</sup> Ulam, 209.

<sup>79</sup> Keylor, 147.



concluded a Naval Agreement with Germany in June 1935 and Belgium renounced its military commitment to France in October 1936.<sup>80</sup>

The final obstacle to the onset of German aggression remained the demilitarized Rhineland in 1936. Without substantial alliances or effective collective security, the Rhineland, widely regarded as the most important guarantee of German good behavior in Europe, provided a psychological buffer between a hostile Germany and France.<sup>81</sup> Although Germany's militarizing of the Rhineland did not change the military balance, it affected the smaller countries in Europe significantly;<sup>82</sup> Germany had abolished France's ascendancy and deprived her of an independent foreign policy, creating an environment where France, from behind the Maginot Line, could no longer guarantee Eastern Europe's security.<sup>83</sup>

German aggression moved swiftly both diplomatically and militarily after 1936. Political rapprochement with Poland, Hungary, and Italy, and improved relations with Yugoslavia and Romania, undermined French security while the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan further threatened German rivals. Following *Anschluss* with Austria in March 1938 and western appeasement in Munich that September, Hitler completed his domination of Eastern Europe in March 1939 when Germany occupied Prague, turning Slovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia and Lithuania into

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 144-154.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>83</sup> Ulam, 234-235.

satellite states.<sup>84</sup> Germany had disrupted the balance of power on the continent and heightened concern over Poland. Soviet leaders responded shrewdly. A month after the German absorption of Czechoslovakia, Stalin had floated two trial balloons to estimate the intentions of the two contending blocks that were forming in anticipation of the impending showdown over Poland.<sup>85</sup>

### **C. PROPOSITION ONE**

From March 1939 until August 1939, Great Britain, France, and the U.S.S.R. struggled to address German aggression. The major powers surrounding Germany reacted to the threat posed to Eastern Europe by Hitler's designs. Soviet leaders approached Great Britain and France, as well as Germany, seeking an alliance to protect their security. The following section will identify the factors contributing to the formation of the Hitler-Stalin Pact in August 1939. By examining the structural, relational and domestic forces pushing Germany and the U.S.S.R. towards a military alliance, the first multipolar proposition will be tested: in a multipolar system, alliances are based on unit level attributes.

#### **1. Multipolar System Structure**

By the summer of 1939, the forces of anarchy, polarity, and the security dilemma were heavily influencing the threat perceptions and foreign policy decisions of the major powers. The failure of collective security and the rise of German power on the continent

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<sup>84</sup> Kaylor, 156-169.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 171.

made the establishment of allies critical for Great Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. By 1939 western appeasement had given Germany an eastern and western screen against military intervention from the great powers.<sup>86</sup> Great Britain sought agreements to preclude a single continental power from emerging, France needed assistance to make territorial defense in the west possible, and the U.S.S.R. desperately sought some way to prevent German expansionism from filling the entire Eastern Europe power vacuum that separated the two nations. These structural factors encouraged each power to seek alliances, but did not dictate with whom.

In September 1939, the military strength each power possessed also influenced the structure of the international system. Great Britain maintained a very strong navy and was equipped with an increasingly capable air force, while its standing army managed only 2-4 small divisions.<sup>87</sup> France's army was defensively poised as the second best force on the continent and its naval forces were strong, while its air force lacked the capability of British or German assets.<sup>88</sup> Despite Mussolini's claims of awesome Italian military might, in 1939 his assets consisted of an air force slightly more capable than the French, a medium sized army, and a navy competitive with the British and French in the

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<sup>86</sup> Keylor, 154.

<sup>87</sup> In September 1939, British military assets included 12 battleships, 3 battle-cruisers, 6 aircraft carriers, 68 cruisers, 201 destroyers, and 69 submarines; 2-4 divisions; 1,400 aircraft (with modern fighters). Cited from P.M.H. Bell, *The Origins of the Second World War in Europe*. (London and New York: Longman Inc., 1986), 174-176.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 167-169. In September 1939, French military of 84 divisions, 4500 anti-tank guns and 2200 tanks; 300 modern fighters and 175 obsolete bombers; 5 battleships, 2 battle-cruisers, 1 aircraft carrier, 18 cruisers, 50 destroyers, and 70 submarines.

Mediterranean.<sup>89</sup> Germany's 103 divisions and over 3,000 aircraft threatened European stability while its Navy ranked lowest among Hitler's priorities.<sup>90</sup> Because Stalin's purges of 1937-38 eliminated the existing high command and half the officer corps,<sup>91</sup> the Russian military, despite a massive army and large air force, was weak relative to the other European powers.<sup>92</sup> Great Britain's naval and air power was critical to French interest in a protracted war against Germany, Germany's land and air power threatened expansion east and west prompting counter-alliances, and Soviet military weakness dictated either guaranteed commitment from the west or accommodation with Germany in the east to protect Soviet interests, security, and survivability. In this multipolar environment, system structure alone cannot account for alliance selection as Russia legitimately faced two alliance options.

## **2. Unit Handicaps**

In multipolar international systems, ideology, bureaucratic politics, and political leaders serve as unit-level handicaps that can either inhibit or facilitate alliance selection and alternatives. In both France and Great Britain during the 1930's, the handicaps affecting an alliance with the Soviets were similar. Both nations' political leaders faced

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 186. The Italian military maintained fewer than 1,000 aircraft, mostly obsolete; 38 infantry divisions; 4 battleships, 6 cruisers, 16 destroyers, 26 torpedo boats, and 64 submarines.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 191. The German military consisted of 103 divisions (52 active, 51 reserve), including 86 infantry and 6 armor divisions; 3374 combat aircraft; 2 battle-cruisers, 3 pocket battleships, 6 cruisers, 17 destroyers, 17 torpedo boats, and 56 submarines (26 ocean going).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 197. The Soviet military consisted of 90 infantry and 16 cavalry divisions; 5000 obsolete aircraft.

strong domestic anti-communist sentiments.<sup>93</sup> Anti-war sentiment throughout France supported pacifism, disarmament, and the League of Nations, as illustrated by Aristide Briand's speech welcoming Germany into the League: "Away with rifles, machine-guns, and artillery. Make way for conciliation, arbitration, and peace."<sup>94</sup> Similar sentiments reverberated among the Liberals, Labour Party, and Conservatives throughout Britain.<sup>95</sup> From the western perspective, ambiguous threat perceptions inherent in multipolar systems permitted domestic attitudes to inhibit the formation of warranted military alliances, especially with an ideologically repulsive Soviet regime.

In Germany, domestic factors played a different role in shaping foreign policy. Despite parliamentary origins, by 1933 the new elite exercised power without institutional constraints.<sup>96</sup> Germany of the 1930's was described as a "dual state" where the old and new ruling groups co-existed while Hitler's elite dictated matters of foreign and military policy.<sup>97</sup> Since Hitler drove German foreign policy, his biases influenced the course of international events. Hitler advocated emigration (by force) to contiguous territories to solve Germany's arable land problem and ensure German security and prosperity.<sup>98</sup> Hitler believed, after much persuasion from Joachim von Rippentrop, that only Stalin could protect Poland and therefore accommodation with the Soviets may

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<sup>93</sup> Keylor, 172.

<sup>94</sup> Bell, 193.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>98</sup> Keylor, 139.

eliminate western involvement in Eastern Europe.<sup>99</sup> Finally, Hitler's generals, lobbying to prevent a two front conflict, pressured Hitler to reach accommodation with the Soviets when British and French overtures towards Stalin intensified.<sup>100</sup> Alliance alternatives in a multipolar system allow domestic factors to influence alliance behavior.

After being named Commissar of Foreign Affairs in 1917, Leon Trotsky declared: "I will issue a few revolutionary proclamations to the peoples of the world and then shut up shop," indicating the Soviet ideological distaste for traditional diplomacy and foreign affairs.<sup>101</sup> However, the Soviets were forced to engage in *realpolitik* over time, first bridging the ideological divide for reasons of *realpolitik* with Germany in the 1920's.<sup>102</sup> By the 1930's, ideological preferences gave way to strategic concerns: Stalin, who made all the critical decisions with regard to foreign policy, sought accommodation with Hitler after Germany's rise for fear of Hitler's intentions towards the U.S.S.R. and the Japanese threat to the east.<sup>103</sup> Soviet knowledge of German war plans through well-placed intelligence assets in Tokyo, however, gave Stalin confidence that Hitler would turn towards the West, not the U.S.S.R., after attacking Poland.<sup>104</sup> Finally, V.M. Molotov's replacement of the pro-western Maxim Litvinov as Soviet Foreign Minister on 3 May

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<sup>99</sup> Ulam, 273.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 277.

<sup>101</sup> Bell, 111.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>103</sup> Keylor, 149.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 172.

1939, served to pacify German fears and antagonize the West into speeding negotiations with the Soviets, although the core ambition of Soviet policy remained the same.<sup>105</sup>

Domestic handicaps served as inhibitors to western alliance behavior and accommodation with Stalin. In Germany, Hitler's preferences, the lack of institutional restraints, and the arguments of the military and Rippentrop colored alliance selection. Finally, ideological revulsion of the West gave way in the U.S.S.R. to a realist policy adopted by Stalin and driven by strategic considerations and internal military weakness in the pursuit of Soviet domestic interests.

### **3. Interests and Strength Inequalities**

The influences of system structure and alliance handicaps are seen in the relations between states. International relationships, defined by common and competing interests and strength inequalities, narrow alliance alternatives in multipolar systems. This section will evaluate how the relations between states affected Stalin's decision to either accommodate Hitler or ally with Great Britain and France.

Common and competing interests among the European powers encouraged an alliance between France, Great Britain, and the U.S.S.R. The Soviets and the Germans had competing strategic interests in territorial aggrandizement in Eastern Europe.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, Hitler's intrinsic interest in suppressing German communism competed directly with Stalin's intrinsic interest in undermining fascism, which to Stalin

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 173.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 172.

represented the most decadent form of capitalism.<sup>107</sup> Additionally, the rise of Germany and the decline of disarmament provided a simultaneous reversal in French and Soviet attitudes towards each other.<sup>108</sup> Because German aggression in Czechoslovakia could not be justified as national self-determination, Great Britain, France, and the Soviets had a strategic interest in thwarting German ambitions.<sup>109</sup>

A number of obstacles blocked British, French and Soviet collusion. The French refusal to allow military coordination in the Franco-Soviet Pact, their failure to include the Soviets at Munich, and their delay in dispatching a diplomatic mission to Moscow in July 1939 convinced Stalin that the West's interests in Eastern Europe were not sufficiently strong.<sup>110</sup> The threat of British and French appeasement towards Hitler in regards to Poland's security worried Stalin; Stalin sought to convince Britain and France their strategic interests required deterring German ambitions in Poland.<sup>111</sup> Because he feared abandonment by the West, Stalin sought to extract demanding western commitments to Poland while pursuing accommodation with Hitler.<sup>112</sup>

Common interests supporting a Hitler-Stalin Pact proved overwhelming. Poland's refusal to join the Anti-Comintern Pact made Hitler reverse his timetable for

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 172-173.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 173-174.

<sup>111</sup> Ulam, 269.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 275.



European domination, requiring Hitler to defeat Poland in the east before turning west.<sup>113</sup> Hitler sought a guarantee against a two front war, and he hoped that agreement with the Soviets would convince the West that Poland was indefensible with Stalin on Hitler's side. Stalin, for his part, wanted either a free hand in the Baltic region while Germany was locked in an inevitable conflict with the West, or military assistance from Great Britain and France in a two front operation against Germany.<sup>114</sup> Also, Hitler had a particular, strategic interest in the timing of the Polish campaign to permit his forces to capture Poland and return west prior to the arrival of the rainy season in Eastern Europe.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, Germany's unwillingness to extend its military support to Japan demonstrated that Hitler did not have the strategic capability or general interest in a two front war against the Soviets, making accommodation between the two leaders more likely.<sup>116</sup> By 14 April 1939, Stalin, in an effort to extract more concessions from Germany, tried to convince Germany through negotiations that the British and French shared substantial strategic and general interests in Eastern Europe.<sup>117</sup>

Considerations of strength inequalities, resources, and military capability also pointed towards a German-Soviet Pact in 1939. The uncertainty and intransigence of the Polish position, coupled with the Romanian denial of Soviet troop movement through its territory, made British-French-Soviet mutual support tough to enact geographically. The

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<sup>113</sup> Keylor, 170.

<sup>114</sup> Ulam, 271-272.

<sup>115</sup> Keylor, 174.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>117</sup> Ulam, 269.

best offer Britain or France could make the Soviets (or the Poles, for that matter) was a promise of indirect support through aggression on Germany's western flank.<sup>118</sup> Soviet eagerness for specific military commitments from the West and the West's unwillingness to comply indicates that neither country was militarily prepared to support one another adequately.<sup>119</sup> Hitler's concern shifted from Soviet industrialization in the 1930's towards British and French rearmament, encouraging him to seek an agreement with Stalin and attack the West before British and French strength increased.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, Germany's precarious reliance on raw material imports and lack of foreign exchange drove Hitler to endorse rapid military campaigns in Poland and then France, requiring Stalin's tacit approval and dictating Hitler's ambitious timeline.<sup>121</sup>

In summary, domestic factors, affecting alliance handicaps and the relations between states, determine alliance selection in multipolar systems. In the post-WWI international system, structural influences of anarchy and the security dilemma caused nations to seek alliances, but did not dictate particular partners. Unit attributes, therefore, were critical in determining alignment and alliance selection throughout the period: Not until just days prior to Germany's invasion of Poland were the competing sides formalized. The next two sections will demonstrate that structural considerations outweigh unit handicaps in the formation of multipolar alliances, and that the formation

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<sup>118</sup> Keylor, 172.

<sup>119</sup> Ulam, 276.

<sup>120</sup> Ulam, 246.

<sup>121</sup> Keylor, 158.

of multipolar alliances incrementally moves towards two opposing coalitions of equal strength.

#### **D. PROPOSITION TWO**

- In a multipolar system, alliance handicaps are ultimately overcome by structurally induced factors.

There is ample evidence that alliance handicaps were overcome by structurally induced factors during the formation of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939. In France, socialist leader Leon Blum declared the League in 1921 "the embodiment of the civilized world" but after open German rearmament in 1935, "he declared that the guarantee of peace lay in unity of action between the western democracies and the USSR."<sup>122</sup> His article in *Le Populaire* in November 1938 "argued the necessity of opposing Hitler by means of armaments and alliances."<sup>123</sup> In Britain, a similar pattern of power politics dominating domestic preferences occurred. Most striking was the apparent ideological contradiction between British criticism of Hitler's regime and British support for the repressive Polish military dictatorship, as well as Britain's overt effort to ignore Stalin's atrocities.<sup>124</sup> Structural constraints dominated alliance handicaps: Three days after the German occupation of Prague, Great Britain and France approached the U.S.S.R., Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey about the possibility of forming a coalition

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<sup>122</sup> Bell, 97.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 106.

against Germany, demonstrating the influence of general, strategic, structural interests over particular, intrinsic, domestic concerns.<sup>125</sup>

It was not clear how far German foreign policy was actually governed by ideology.<sup>126</sup> In fact, the Hitler-Stalin Pact did not conform to Hitler's writings, especially in *The Secret Book* (his second book, published in 1961), where Hitler ruled out an alliance with the U.S.S.R. as ideology infeasible.<sup>127</sup> Hitler hoped an alliance with the Soviets would convince the West that its strategic and general interests were not strong enough to challenge Germany over Eastern Europe without the promise of Soviet support.<sup>128</sup>

Stalin's thinking rested on the traditional Russian belief that the successful defense of Soviet territory rests on dividing enemies and maintaining a flexible foreign policy. This approach paralleled similar Tsarist thinking concerning the challenges of Napoleon in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the rise of a unified Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>129</sup> Soviet foreign policy from the 1800's illustrates the historical significance of structural considerations, according to Barbara Jelavich:

The Russian state was adequately defended, and major conflicts, which could involve the existence or integrity of the empire, were avoided. Russian policy remained responsive and resilient. No attempt was made to

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<sup>125</sup> Keylor, 170.

<sup>126</sup> Bell, 82.

<sup>127</sup> Bell, 84.

<sup>128</sup> Ulam, 271-272.

<sup>129</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy: 1814-1914*. (Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1964), 288.

inaugurate great programs of conquest; advances were made when the road was clear.<sup>130</sup>

An ideological foreign policy was not possible for the Soviets, especially under Stalin whose foreign policy in the late 1930's was dominated by a cautious realism.<sup>131</sup> When German threats exacerbated the Soviet security dilemma, Soviet leaders reverted to conservative policies based on power, geography, and history.<sup>132</sup> The Soviets sought alliances with countries as diverse as France, Great Britain, the United States, Japan, Poland, and Germany in an effort to prevent conflict on multiple borders and to deflect aggression away from Soviet territory, demonstrating its willingness to forego domestic preferences for structural constraints.<sup>133</sup> Despite communist disapproval of balance of power politics, it became a cornerstone of Stalin's foreign policy.<sup>134</sup> In Great Britain, France, Germany, and the U.S.S.R., alliance handicaps were overcome by structurally induced factors of common and competing interests and strength inequality.

#### **E. PROPOSITION THREE**

The Hitler-Stalin Pact seems to disprove proposition three (In a multipolar system, the consecutive selection of alliances incrementally moves towards two coalitions of equal strength) because Stalin apparently opted to bandwagon with—not

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 295.

<sup>131</sup> Bell, 124.

<sup>132</sup> David MacKenzie and Michael W. Curran, *Russia and the U.S.S.R. in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1997), 246.

<sup>133</sup> Ulam, 217.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 232.

balance against—the German threat, sharing in the fourth partition of Poland.<sup>135</sup> Germany clearly represented the stronger of the two forces in conflict on the continent, so why did Stalin choose to enable German aggression instead of challenging it? Because the West could not guarantee Soviet security in the face of German aggression, Stalin choose to buy time with Germany until Soviet military strength increased and German military might decreased from war in the west.

The Purges of the late 1930's decimated the Soviet's military structure and rendered the U.S.S.R. gravely weakened as a military power.<sup>136</sup> After the Polish-German Pact, Stalin realized that Nazism represented a real danger to the Soviets and looked towards western democracies for Soviet security.<sup>137</sup> After courting the West for military support, Stalin concluded that sufficient military support could not be brought to bear against Germany by the West to protect Soviet interests in Eastern Europe. Only after a German-Soviet accommodation to fill the power vacuum in Eastern Europe bought Stalin time and territorial protection in the Baltic region while Germany weakened under allied attack could Stalin entertain joining Great Britain and France in an alliance against Germany.

Stalin left his diplomatic options open as long as possible, waiting until 21 August 1939 to agree to an alliance with Hitler, negotiating with Great Britain and France to

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<sup>135</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 260.

<sup>136</sup> Bell, 116.

<sup>137</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 257.

determine what they were willing to do for Poland and Russia.<sup>138</sup> By allying with Hitler, Stalin received territorial guarantees critical to Soviet security, interests, and military capability should hostilities with Germany arise.<sup>139</sup> A premature alliance with Great Britain and France, conversely, risked provoking German aggression or a counter-alliance between Germany and Japan, opening a two front war against the Soviets.<sup>140</sup> Despite the temporary agreement with Hitler, Stalin could have few illusions about permanently appeasing Hitler.

Stalin recognized that Germany and the U.S.S.R. would soon be neighbors and hostilities with Germany would come eventually, either after operations in Poland concluded or following war to the west.<sup>141</sup> By publicly pledging to support the territorial integrity of Poland on 31 March and initiating military conscription on 26 April, Great Britain altered the forces weighing on the Soviet's decision of alliance partners.<sup>142</sup> Great Britain's guarantee to Poland altered the balance of the international system because its timing provided a guarantee to the U.S.S.R. and doomed the Polish state, making a German-Western Europe conflict likely following any German incursion into Polish territory and reducing the likelihood of near-term German-Soviet hostilities.<sup>143</sup> With the initial British pledge to support Poland, the U.S.S.R. was now in a position to

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<sup>138</sup> Ulam, 275.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 276.

<sup>140</sup> Keylor, 172.

<sup>141</sup> Ulam, 261.

<sup>142</sup> Keylor, 171.

<sup>143</sup> Ulam, 267.

delay the inevitable hostilities with Germany until a true coalition of equal strength could challenge Germany from its immediate eastern and western borders.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has validated the three propositions developed to explain multipolar alliance formation. The evidence available concerning the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 illustrates that unit attributes and alliance handicaps influence alliance selection in a multipolar system. Structurally induced considerations of strength inequalities and strategic, general interests begin to dominate unit driven considerations when subsequent alliances and events intensify the level of the security dilemma internationally. By 1939, the collapse of collective security and the rise of German power gravely threatened the other European powers. When a single nation (like Germany) or a coalition of nations threatens a multipolar system with overwhelming force, the system can be said to imitate a bipolar arrangement dominated by structural factors: the other powers forego alliance handicaps for structural influences. By 1939, the consecutive selection of alliances created two coalitions of perceived equal strength, even as the Hitler-Stalin Pact momentarily shifted the balance of forces away from two stable coalitions of equal magnitude. Only Stalin's decision in 1939 would permit by 1941 a situation where the West and the Soviets in alliance could overcome German threats to the international system.



## **IV. THE WARSAW PACT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter applies a realist theory of alliance behavior to the Warsaw Pact to evaluate the propositions about state behavior in a bipolar international system. The first section discusses critical alliance developments between 1945 and 1955 affecting the structure of the international system and the relations between states. Next, the two bipolar propositions will be tested against the evidence presented concerning the behavior of the United States and the Soviet Union. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about whether or not Soviet alliance behavior conformed to the theoretical predictions for a bipolar international system.

### **B. ALLIANCE DEVELOPMENTS: 1945-1955**

When U.S. and Soviet forces met at the Elbe river on 25 April 1945, the momentary euphoria of victory in Europe masked harsh geopolitical realities in Europe: Political disagreement among the victors and the pursuit of German unconditional surrender created a political vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>144</sup> Winston Churchill sought a balance of power in Europe, Franklin Roosevelt envisioned a postwar collective security enforced by the "Four Policemen," and Joseph Stalin pursued the expansion of Russia's influence into Eastern Europe.<sup>145</sup> As Britain's power waned, the

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<sup>144</sup> Keylor, 251-252.

<sup>145</sup> Kissinger, 395.

United States and the Soviets increasingly resembled two opposing camps in a geo-strategic struggle for Europe.

### **1. Post-WWII International System**

Internal conditions in the U.S.S.R. following WWII were bleak. The western portion of the country lay in ruins, industrial production ran at half its prewar level and estimates of Soviet troop losses ranged from 15 to 20 million. Because almost two-thirds of Soviet resources in the region occupied by Germany were lost, agricultural and industrial production remained below their prewar levels. Despite harsh economic conditions and military reductions from 11 to 3 million troops following the war, the Soviets remained the only Great Power on the continent.<sup>146</sup> Draconian policies produced heavy industrial growth and some agricultural recovery, and by 1953, the U.S.S.R. became the second strongest industrial power.<sup>147</sup>

In Europe, nations struggled to regain their strength: France remained decimated; Germany stood divided and occupied; and Britain, exhausted, receded from the continent. The Soviets were poised to fill this political vacuum throughout Europe.<sup>148</sup> Britain, given a substantial short-term loan from the United States following the end of lend-lease, spent the funds on food and fuel instead of long-term reconstruction, sharpening British economic hardship. British retreats from "Gibraltar to Singapore" opened a

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<sup>146</sup> Ulam, 400-405.

<sup>147</sup> Mackenzie and Curran, 282-283.

<sup>148</sup> Kissinger, 426.

power vacuum in Eurasia akin to the East European void brought on by Germany's collapse in 1945.<sup>149</sup>

Despite the European and Eurasian political vacuum, the United States disengaged from the region after Germany's defeat. U.S. war industry was dismantled and military personnel were cut from 12 to 1.4 million by 1947. Accustomed to small volunteer forces in peacetime, the United States tolerated the demand for occupation forces in Europe, but any call for additional forces to balance threats to European stability poised by a trusted wartime ally fell on deaf ears. Instead, Roosevelt—like Wilson—believed the defeat of Germany would usher in a new era of collective security, replacing the balance of power as the mechanism establishing global order.<sup>150</sup>

Roosevelt's dream of a United Nations, supported militarily by the "Four Policemen" (Britain, United States, the U.S.S.R. and China), struggled from the onset. During the Dumbarton Oaks conference in the fall of 1944, the Americans and Soviets disagreed over Security Council voting procedures and veto power, as well as general membership, when the Soviets sought representation for all sixteen of their Republics. The impasse persisted when the Soviets sent a low-level diplomatic mission to the initial U.N. conference in San Francisco.<sup>151</sup> The United Nations' failure to protect the Greeks from communist insurrection marked the first of many instances where a divided Security

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<sup>149</sup> Keylor, 259-260.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 253-255.

<sup>151</sup> Ulam, 372-380.

Council undermined collective security.<sup>152</sup> Both superpowers recognized this Achilles heel: Stalin warned of United Nations' ineffectiveness without Great Power cooperation and Roosevelt realized both consensus and force drove collective security effectiveness and legitimacy.<sup>153</sup> The United Nations struggled thereafter as the Security Council members failed to perceive their global interests in the same way.<sup>154</sup>

## **2. Shift to Bipolar Relations**

The relations between the allies began to unravel at the Yalta and Potsdam conferences in February 1945 and July 1945. Three issues dominated the deliberations: Roosevelt's lobby for collective security; the political future of Poland; and the reunification of Germany. Roosevelt, who referred to the ruthless Stalin as "Uncle Joe" since their November 1943 meeting in Teheran, hoped that his charm would overcome *Realpolitik* and thought his charm would lead to collective security, ignoring Stalin's commitment to Soviet national interest.<sup>155</sup> Despite Roosevelt's overtures, Stalin left Yalta with a deeper conviction of U.S. commitment to spheres of influence.<sup>156</sup> Britain and the United States demanded the inclusion of resistance leaders to the provisional government in Poland, but the Soviets, unimpressed by an American delegation lacking even remote familiarity with Polish politics, reserved the right to screen participants,

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<sup>152</sup> Keylor, 259.

<sup>153</sup> Ulam, 412, and Kissinger, 397.

<sup>154</sup> Kissinger, 420.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 412.

<sup>156</sup> Keylor, 194.

nullifying the concession.<sup>157</sup> At Potsdam six months later, superpower diplomacy rapidly became a “dialogue of the deaf.”<sup>158</sup> The delegates put the proposal for the eventual reunification of Germany on hold and left the final drafting of the peace treaties to their foreign ministers, contingent on the creation of German representation to sign it, essentially forestalling a joint Allied peace with Germany.<sup>159</sup> Potsdam represented the last of the “Big Three” summits as relations faltered in the absence of a common struggle.<sup>160</sup>

In Eastern Europe, while the United States attempted to disengage from the continent, Soviet influence spread into Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Hungary following Yalta.<sup>161</sup> Between 1945 and 1948 Stalin consolidated Soviet influence in the region molding “progressive elements” into Soviet-supported regimes to counter potential German resurgence or western influence.<sup>162</sup> Within two years the Soviets accomplished domination in Eastern Europe of a scope and breadth that had originally brought on WWII when Germany demonstrated similar ambitions.<sup>163</sup>

The United States re-engaged the continent sooner than expected, drawn to action along the southern Eurasian periphery where old British colonial interests could no longer

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<sup>157</sup> Ulam, 375-377.

<sup>158</sup> Kissinger, 434.

<sup>159</sup> Ulam, 390-391.

<sup>160</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 284.

<sup>161</sup> Ulam, 379.

<sup>162</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 283.

<sup>163</sup> Ulam, 423.

withstand Soviet expansion. The United States strong demand for Soviet troop withdrawal from Iran heralded American determination to resist Soviet expansion throughout Eurasia.<sup>164</sup> This determined support arose amidst a complete lack of U.S. domestic interests in Iran: the United States did not maintain close economic ties with Iran, nor did it face a boisterous Iranian lobby encouraging US intervention.<sup>165</sup> The Soviets then instigated a crisis in Turkey by demanding Mediterranean naval bases from the Turkish government, threatening military action.<sup>166</sup> To the United States, Russian possession of bases in the straits was similar to Soviet domination of the Eastern Mediterranean. Finally, the United States countered Soviet support for a communist-led insurgency against the British backed government in Greece.<sup>167</sup> When the Attlee government in London informed the United States it could no longer support Greece or Turkey, the United States acted unilaterally in Europe.<sup>168</sup>

The Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine followed the confrontation in Greece and Turkey. In March 1947, the United States pledged economic and military support to Greece and Turkey, overcoming traditional U.S. isolationism.<sup>169</sup> Faced with “the choice of substituting American for British power in the region or of passively permitting Soviet power to fill the void,” the United States extended economic assistance to war-weary

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<sup>164</sup> Keylor, 256.

<sup>165</sup> Ulam, 425.

<sup>166</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 285.

<sup>167</sup> Keylor, 257-258.

<sup>168</sup> Kissinger, 451.

<sup>169</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 285.

nations in Europe whose economic and military weakness created a potential breeding ground for Soviet influence.<sup>170</sup> The Soviets responded by creating the Communist Information Bureau (COMINFORM) to support communist political activity in Western Europe and the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) to extract resources from satellite countries.<sup>171</sup> Subsequently, policy makers in the State department and the Pentagon were charged with developing a rationale for a coordinated response to Soviet expansionist pressure.<sup>172</sup> George Kennan, in the "Long Telegram," suggested that the United States create a position of strength and containment to wait out the pending collapse inherent in all "Messianic movements" like the Soviet regime.<sup>173</sup> It suddenly was in the U.S. national interest to support the political, social, and economic institutions of whichever nations were challenged by Soviet power. By 1948, Europe was organized into two political and economic blocks, each dependent on and subject to superpower influence.

The superpower contest intensified in Eastern Europe with the Czechoslovakian coup in February 1948 and the Soviet blockade of Berlin in June 1948, both of which effectively severed the remaining two links between east and west. The western airlift into Berlin broke the isolation, providing momentum towards a divided Germany.<sup>174</sup> Anticipating future conflict in Europe, the United States reintroduced military

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<sup>170</sup> Keylor, 260-262.

<sup>171</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 285.

<sup>172</sup> Keylor, 261.

<sup>173</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 285.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 286.

conscription and universal training.<sup>175</sup> Despite tentative German solutions developed at Yalta and Potsdam, the United States and the Soviets suggested alternative proposals to win German political and popular support, forcing Stalin ultimately to protect territorial settlements in Poland and foregoing any chance of a unified, disarmed Germany.<sup>176</sup> With the establishment of two separate German regimes, any remaining illusion of further allied cooperation in Europe faded.<sup>177</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) emerged from the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the Brussels Pact and western coordination in occupied West Germany.<sup>178</sup> The pact depended on a U.S. “nuclear cloak” over Western Europe to counter a perceived conventional superiority of 14 western divisions compared to 175 Soviet divisions.<sup>179</sup> The Truman administration’s prompt and effective response to the Korean conflict eliminated any doubts Europe had regarding the ability or willingness of the United States to honor its commitments abroad.<sup>180</sup>

### **3. Post-Stalin U.S.-Soviet Relations**

1953 marked a change in leadership for both superpowers. After Stalin’s death in March, Khrushchev emerged as the eventual winner of an internal power struggle, becoming First Party Secretary in March 1953 and assuming role as Premier in March

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<sup>175</sup> Keylor, 267.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>177</sup> Ulam, 455.

<sup>178</sup> Keylor, 272.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 275.



1958.<sup>181</sup> Attempts to further legitimize the regime by instituting liberalization reforms in 1953 contributed to a workers' uprising in East Germany in June 1953, demonstrating strained Soviet influence in Eastern Europe.<sup>182</sup> In Washington, Eisenhower pursued a policy of "massive retaliation" as a cost-effective means to deter the Soviets and overcome conventional force inferiority in Europe.<sup>183</sup> John Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, endorsed a more ambitious anti-Soviet policy of "roll back" to replace "containment."<sup>184</sup> These changes enhanced U.S. strength in Europe and called in question internal Soviet resolve to further expand in Europe.

Any question of a changing balance of power in Europe ended with the failure of the Paris Conference in 1954 to reach a general German settlement. The United States, Britain, and France subsequently terminated their occupation of West Germany and endorsed political autonomy and NATO membership for the Federal Republic of Germany. An independent West Germany's incorporation into NATO on 9 May 1955 cemented the final boundary of superpower conflict in the European heartland.<sup>185</sup> This development precipitated a meeting of the seven Soviet satellites in Warsaw, resulting in the Warsaw Pact of May 1955, a defensive alliance of satellites and the U.S.S.R.<sup>186</sup> After

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 281-282.

<sup>181</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 290-293.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 300-301.

<sup>183</sup> Keylor, 285.

<sup>184</sup> Ulam, 541.

<sup>185</sup> Keylor, 286-287.

<sup>186</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 300.

10 years of uncertainty following WWII, Europe became politically, economically, and militarily formally divided between West and East.

### **C. PROPOSITION ONE**

From 1945 through 1955, U.S. and Soviet power filled the political vacuum in Europe and Eurasia caused by the collapse of Germany, the retreat of Britain from the continent, and the effects of world war on numerous countries. The United States and the Soviets emerged as the sole superpowers capable of dictating the ebb and flow of geopolitics on the continent. The following section will identify the factors contributing to the formation of the Warsaw Pact in May 1955, examining superpower interplay. By examining the structural roots of superpower alliance behavior, the first bipolar proposition on alliance formation will be tested: in a bipolar system, alliances are based on structural factors.

#### **1. Unit Handicaps**

The United States, committed to peacetime isolationism, desired to disengage from Europe by reducing its military personnel, meeting its limited occupation-force requirements, and dismantling its war industry.<sup>187</sup> President Roosevelt proclaimed: "I do not want the United States to have the postwar burden of reconstituting France, Italy, and the Balkans...This is not our natural task at a distance of 3,500 miles or more."<sup>188</sup> While the United States retreated from commitments abroad, the Soviets, despite domestic

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<sup>187</sup> Kaylor, 254.

<sup>188</sup> Kissinger, 395-396.

weakness, recognized the geopolitical vacuum to their west. Despite internal suffering, the Soviets emphasized heavy industry and collectivization of agriculture in pursuit of expansionist aims.<sup>189</sup>

Although Stalin's insistence on securing border territory from Finland, Poland, and Romania to enhance Russian security was tacitly permitted by the West, further incursions into Eastern Europe were viewed as threats to the balance of power in Europe. Because the Russian threat in Europe after 1945 represented a force no European coalition could oppose, "The tough-minded realism of geopolitics," according to historian William Keylor, "began to replace the Wilsonian reveries of Roosevelt in the minds of the foreign policy advisors of the new American president."<sup>190</sup> By force of circumstance emerging from bipolarity, American leaders who had intended to withdrawal from Europe, felt compelled to come back into Europe to stop Russian expansion.<sup>191</sup>

## **2. Bipolar System Structure**

The United States inherited the former British role of balancing power in Europe due to structural factors: in a bipolar international system, no coalition of lesser powers can effectively offset one superpower without the assistance of the other. Two years after the end of WWII, the United States adopted the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine when the collapse of Pax Britannica appeared to endanger all of Europe.<sup>192</sup> Protecting

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 441.

<sup>190</sup> Keylor, 253.

<sup>191</sup> Ulam, 438.

<sup>192</sup> Keylor, 261.

the Greek government from communist insurgency challenged U.S. domestic preferences because a massive program of economic aid to a financially unstable regime seemed inconceivable to postwar America.<sup>193</sup> The United States, with mere tourism ties to Greece, would eventually advance the Truman Doctrine: "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."<sup>194</sup> Structural interests overcame domestic opposition, and the United States ultimately extended grants and credits totaling \$13.2 billion (over 3 times its prewar total exports) to European nations by 1952.<sup>195</sup>

The Soviets turned down the U.S. offer to participate in the Marshall Plan despite urgent economic needs in all the communist nations. Although the Soviets sent a delegate to the Paris conference that initially organized the economic assistance package, Stalin decided not to participate out of fears and delusions about U.S. intentions in Europe.<sup>196</sup> Alternately, Stalin may have been structurally compelled to inhibit any western influence in his eastern sphere. Stalin wondered why a capitalist country would divest itself of billions of dollars to save the European economy, failing to grasp the structural impetus involved. The Soviets assumed a capitalist conspiracy since structurally induced assistance did not make sense domestically for the United States.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 260.

<sup>194</sup> Ulam, 430.

<sup>195</sup> Keylor, 263-264.

<sup>196</sup> Ulam, 434.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 447.

The policy of "containment" that emerged led the United States with to combat Soviet pressures for the indefinite future around the vast Soviet periphery.<sup>198</sup> Bipolar relations determined U.S. national interests as the United States pursued the preservation of the status quo. Despite Roosevelt's previous commitment against creating hostile spheres of influence, the United States supported countries already on the U.S. side of the superpower dividing line—a classic spheres of influence strategy.<sup>199</sup>

The establishment of NATO also transgressed domestic constraints, marking the first U.S. peacetime alliance in history.<sup>200</sup> Congress supplemented this structural commitment by passing the Selective Service Act and approving \$1.5 billion to finance the initial U.S. military commitment.<sup>201</sup> Despite its ideological dressing, this new "Atlantic Community" revolved around threat and danger, not common identity or shared beliefs.<sup>202</sup> After the Soviets successfully tested a nuclear device, the United States resolved to station large numbers of ground troops in Europe; develop worldwide air bases to support the bomber fleet; and implement closer military integration within the alliance.<sup>203</sup> The U.S. decision to make a military commitment to Europe surprised Churchill, an ardent supporter of U.S engagement in Europe.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Kissinger, 455.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 456.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 457.

<sup>201</sup> Keylor, 272-273.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 274.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 276.

<sup>204</sup> Kissinger, 461.

The establishment of full-fledged military involvement in Europe by 1952 had precedent-shattering significance for U.S. defense policy and did not materialize without domestic costs: the U.S. public endured austerity measures during the Korean War including wage and price controls and restrictions on consumption.<sup>205</sup> The underlying objective of Truman's policy—the containment of Soviet expansion beyond the regions that had come under Russian military domination at the end of the war—were met in Iran, Turkey, Greece, West Berlin and South Korea through diplomatic, economic, and military power.<sup>206</sup> On Truman's watch, Roosevelt's concept of the "Four Policemen" was replaced by an unprecedented set of coalitions in Europe.<sup>207</sup>

### **3. Re-examining Domestic Factors**

Because the Cold War became couched in ideological language, one might argue that the behavior of the superpowers was governed by domestic attributes vice structural necessity. However, suggesting that the ideology of the Cold War, and therefore domestic factors, drove security considerations mistakes effect for cause. Despite communist motivations, Stalin's security needs dictated where and when insurgency would be supported—witness his policy towards Yugoslavia, China, France, Italy, and Greece. The structure of the bipolar system channeled Soviet expansion towards states Stalin believed that he could maintain political and military control over. Stalin recognized the structure of the bipolar system both permitted and constrained Soviet

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<sup>205</sup> Keylor, 278-279.

<sup>206</sup> Keylor, 282.

<sup>207</sup> Kissinger, 424.

expansion, as evident from his fear of sharp U.S. responses should communism encroach into the western sphere.<sup>208</sup>

There is evidence that U.S. leaders devised the containment policy to rationalize to Congress and the public the structural need to oppose expanding Soviet influence.<sup>209</sup> In February 1947, Dean Acheson argued at a cabinet meeting:

Only two great powers remained in the world...not since Rome and Carthage had there been such a polarization of power on this earth...For the United States to take steps to strengthen countries threatened with Soviet aggression or Communist subversion...was to protect the security of the United States—it was to protect freedom itself.<sup>210</sup>

When he announced the doctrine in public for the first time, Truman omitted the strategic core of Acheson's argument in favor of Wilsonian language: "Faced with the necessity of explaining the new policy to the American people, Truman had to resort to high rhetoric" as the superpower conflict was "dramatized as a contest between two ways of life."<sup>211</sup> Every Truman administration spokesman went to great lengths to distinguish NATO from anything resembling a traditional alliance designed to protect the balance of power.<sup>212</sup> Regardless of whether or not the Cold War became entrenched in ideology on both sides, the initial spark igniting the conflict remains the stark geopolitical reality of superpower conflict in a bipolar setting.

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<sup>208</sup> Keylor, 259.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>210</sup> Kissinger, 452.

<sup>211</sup> Ulam, 432.

<sup>212</sup> Kissinger, 457.

The domestic contest for a Stalin successor between 1953 and 1957 occurred concurrent with the superpower contest in question—U.S. involvement in Europe through NATO and Soviet response with the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet regime at the time, focused domestically on internal power politics and improved quality of life, advocated a post-Stalin thaw with the West and improved legitimacy within its satellites.<sup>213</sup> Despite this domestic atmosphere, the creation of the Warsaw Pact reflected the structural necessity of reacting to advances made by the opposing superpower. The Warsaw Pact emerged to codify Soviet interests in East Germany and throughout the satellites in response to western influence in West Germany, illustrating the interplay of superpower interests in bipolar systems. Strategic interests, dictated the relation between superpowers, are more stable and clear in bipolar world: where one superpower exercises influence in a previously “unclaimed” area, the other is compelled to respond.

#### **D. PROPOSITION TWO**

The first bipolar proposition demonstrated that superpower interests are determined by structural factors, not domestic forces. The second proposition (In a bipolar system, alliances are determined by superpower interests, not lesser-power interests, and codified based on geography, coercion, resources, and finance) will demonstrate that lesser power interests do not significantly affect bipolar alliances because any alliance of lesser powers cannot hope to challenge either superpower without the assistance of the other superpower. Instead, lesser powers may jockey for better

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<sup>213</sup> Keylor, 289.



alliance conditions between the two superpowers, but ultimately bipolar alliances are marked by "pure coordination" rather than bargaining and serve to codify strategic interests of the superpowers with little regard for the interests of the lesser powers. The very nature of bipolar systems, where superpower interests dictate alliance formation, creates alliances that do not appear "mutual" in a multipolar sense and that do not account for lesser power domestic handicaps.

After WWII, superpower interests, based on system structure, became the whole world as two nations who stood apart from the main currents of world politics prior to the war now found their policies intertwined all over the globe, their views clashing on nearly every international issue.<sup>214</sup> Although superpower influence extended around the globe, there were physical limits to influencing lesser powers. Geographical accessibility enhanced U.S. intervention in Greece and Turkey but challenged the U.S. ability to influence events in Poland. Additionally, the spheres of influence understanding between Churchill and Stalin indicated Soviet-inspired communist movements in France and Italy would participate in coalition regimes rather than attempting to usurp them.<sup>215</sup> Both the United States and the Soviets recognized these structural spheres of influence and codified their interests based on super power considerations, not the particular interests of lesser powers. As Henry Wallace stated in the Fall of 1946: "Whether we like it or not

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<sup>214</sup> Ulam, 409.

<sup>215</sup> Keylor, 258-259.

the Russians will try to socialize their sphere of influence just as we try to democratize our sphere of influence.”<sup>216</sup>

The creation of NATO directly illustrates the subordination of lesser power interests to superpower desires in bipolar alliance formation. NATO called for West German rearmament explicitly forbidden in the Potsdam Treaty and opposed by states like France who feared a resurgent German power, causing the French Foreign Minister to declare, “Germany has no army and cannot have one.”<sup>217</sup> After the Korean War began, the U.S. insistence on German rearmament found a more amenable European audience: Europe quickly realized the necessity of unifying under U.S. influence regardless of domestic handicaps, forming the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, proposing the European Defense Community (EDC) in 1952, and formally recognizing the Adenauer regime in Bonn. Plans for the EDC were scrapped when the Brussels Pact and NATO provided for British and German forces to participate in an alliance with the West against the Soviets.<sup>218</sup> U.S. officials, once critical of spheres of influence, strongly favored this separate German solution that incorporated the Bonn regime into its sphere of influence.<sup>219</sup>

The establishment of the Warsaw Pact illustrates the codification of superpower interests in alliance with lesser powers based on geography, coercion, resources, and finance. Despite ideological hostility to communism and general antipathy for Russia,

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<sup>216</sup> Kissinger, 469.

<sup>217</sup> Keylor, 279.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 281-286.

Eastern European states adopted Soviet political and economic models and supported Soviet foreign policy under pressure from occupation armies and civilian collaborators.<sup>220</sup> The very nature of bipolar systems, where superpower interests dictate alliance formation, creates alliances that do not account for lesser power domestic handicaps. Instead, the lesser powers rely on superpowers for their security, regardless of the conditions under which the alliance is negotiated.

Soviet influence in Eastern Europe followed a general pattern including: Red Army occupation; Soviet staffing of domestic communist parties; Soviet support in securing key sources of power in the domestic regime; formation of coalition governments; and Soviet assistance undermining non-communist coalition members to consolidate communist and Soviet influence within the domestic regime.<sup>221</sup> The Soviets employed troops, diplomats, and secret police agents to codify their strategic interests among the satellite states. Non-communist members of coalition governments in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, and Yugoslavia were either squeezed out or reduced to complete subservience. The satellites incurred economic exploitation as the Soviets looted industrial equipment, exacted unequal trade treaties and claiming ownership of national enterprises.<sup>222</sup> This general pattern of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe indicates that Soviet structural interests overwhelmed lesser power concerns.

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<sup>219</sup> Kissinger, 515.

<sup>220</sup> Keylor, 252.

<sup>221</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 283.

<sup>222</sup> Ulam, 388.

Soviet control of Eastern Europe was not codified in an actual alliance until West Germany's ascension into NATO answered the German question. Once West Germany entered NATO, the Soviets quickly solidified their strategic interests with an alliance of their own. The "Warsaw Pact Organization" established a formal military alliance among the satellites for a period of twenty years, replaced separate bilateral treaties between the Soviets and satellites established under Stalin. It functioned primarily as a mechanism of Soviet political domination of Eastern Europe rather than a conventional mutual alliance of the multipolar model.<sup>223</sup>

The establishment of the Warsaw Pact was not overtly threatening to the United States, which had presumed that Soviet interests had already become fully entrenched in the communist controlled leadership of the satellites. Superpower animosity encompassed the European continent between 1945 and 1955 before the particular act of ratifying the Warsaw Pact. However, the Warsaw Pact was not without added benefit for the Soviets. It provided a continual basis for stationing troops in some of the satellites states and received popular support in Poland and Czechoslovakia in light of the likely remilitarization of West Germany.<sup>224</sup> By 1955 the postwar settlement in Europe was emerging, not by negotiation among the victors of the Second World War but with the establishment of structurally dictated spheres of superpower influence.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Keylor, 288.

<sup>224</sup> Ulam, 560.

<sup>225</sup> Kissinger, 521.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has validated the two bipolar propositions developed for alliance formation. The evidence available concerning the emergence of superpower struggle and the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact illustrates that structure dominates alliance behavior in a bipolar system. Since no coalition of lesser powers can challenge the security of either superpower, bipolar alliances form around superpower interests. Both superpowers are compelled to challenge the others influence among the lesser powers despite any domestic handicaps inhibiting action. The United States contained Soviet expansion beyond the regions that had come under Russian military domination at the end of the war in Iran, Turkey, Greece, West Berlin and South Korea through diplomatic, economic, and military power. The Soviets recognized spheres of influence and limited support of communist insurgency to states it could reasonably dominate based on geography, coercion, and finance. As long as a bipolar system persists, structure will dictate superpower alliance formation regardless of lesser power domestic interests.

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## **V. POST COLD WAR SINO-RUSSIAN ALIGNMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter applies a realist theory of alliance behavior to Sino-Soviet relations following the end of the Cold War to evaluate bipolar and multipolar propositions in the current international system. The first section discusses critical developments in the international system affecting the structure of the international system and the relations between states at the end of the Cold War. Next, evidence supporting the influence of domestic and structural factors on Sino-Russian alignment will be presented. This evidence will determine whether bipolar (structural) or multipolar (domestic) forces determine Sino-Russian rapprochement. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about the polarity of the current international system and Russian alignment and alliance behavior.

### **B. POST-COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

Mikhail Gorbachev recognized that the deterioration of the Soviet economic system and U.S. technological superiority guaranteed a U.S. victory in the arms race, thereby precluding the Soviet Union from exercising power and influence in the international system in relation to its size and population. *Glasnost* (political openness) and *perestroika* (economic restructuring) followed, undermining communist control across Eastern Europe, opening the Berlin Wall, and ushering in the reunification of Germany. By the summer of 1991 the communist party, the command economy, and the

multinational Soviet Union all succumbed to democracy, market capitalism and nationalism.<sup>226</sup>

These attempts at liberalization met strong resistance from conservative, communist forces in Russia. Following a failed coup attempt in August of 1991, Boris Yeltsin gained control of the Russian republic and a loose coalition of states in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Meeting on 30 December 1991, the republic leaders of the CIS consented to chief coordinating bodies but failed to draft a political charter, plan economic reform, or establish unified military forces, pre-empting any hope that the CIS would substitute for the former "union" between republics. Russia inherited the Soviet seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) while the international community focused on former Soviet nuclear weapons residing in Kazakstan, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine: It would take three more years until Russia controlled its entire formidable nuclear arsenal.<sup>227</sup>

Ethnic and religious tensions, endangering the security of the Russian Federation and the safety of ethnic Russians living abroad plagued President Yeltsin in the Caucasus and Central Asian states. Yeltsin struggled with a disintegrating periphery and plummeting domestic economy as failed reforms led to a parliamentary coalition of hard-line communists and emerging nationalists. Yeltsin dissolved parliament in September 1993, calling for new parliamentary elections in December, elections which brought

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<sup>226</sup> See Keylor, 452-460; and Robert D. Schulzinger, *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 352-360.

<sup>227</sup> MacKenzie and Curran, 449-450.



communist and nationalist forces to power in the new Duma.<sup>228</sup> Yeltsin's new constitution strengthened the executive branch of the government and limited further reform attempts generated from the legislature.

Further integration of Western European institutions contrasted with disintegration in the former Soviet Union's sphere of influence. The immediate optimism surrounding the absence of bipolar-induced security threats led to the deepening and broadening of European Community cooperation in economic and political affairs through the creation of the European Union, the signing of the Maastricht Treaty and the creation of a single European Market by 1993. Concerned that the United States would disengage from the continent, Europe pursued foreign and security policy coordination, alternately considering strengthening the Western European Union (WEU), creating an European Army Corps (Eurocorps), and modifying NATO objectives and membership. Economic backwardness and historical ethnic enmity affected Central and Eastern Europe to different degrees: Vaclav Havel oversaw the peaceful separation of the Czech Republic from Slovakia while in the former Yugoslavia, economic and ethnic disparities bred violence. Outbreak of widespread violence in the former Yugoslavia by 1992 challenged a common European defense and UN commitment to conflict prevention, since neither entity mustered an adequate response to the hostilities. Collective security and peacekeeping failures in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia highlighted the limits of international consensus and intervention in crisis situations.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> See Keylor, 452-460; and Schulzinger, 352-360.

<sup>229</sup> See Keylor, 468-474; and Schulzinger, 371-377.

While Europe integrated and Russia disintegrated, Asia experienced regional stability and sustained economic growth. China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose 7, 12, and 13 percent annually between 1991 and 1993. Deng Xiaoping accelerated economic modernization in China while prohibiting political liberalization, a policy evident in Tiananmen Square in the spring of 1989. The United States, despite reservations concerning human rights and democratization, de-linked human rights from most-favored nation (MFN) trade status in the early 1990's to open China's vast investment and trade market to the West. Adoption of free-market practices in China and increasing economic links to regional financial powers like Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan created the unintended decentralization and regionalism of a centralized China, increasing domestic pressure on Deng's regime.<sup>230</sup>

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of significant U.S. naval power in the Pacific ushered in a period of peace and security throughout the region. Domestic economic strength and the region's political-military power vacuum ultimately elicited new foreign policy objectives and concerns from China, including designs on Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao Island, and the Spratly and Paracel islands. Japan, China's main regional rival, experienced a period of economic decline and political disagreement with the United States over fair trade practices and alliance burden sharing, questioning Japan's future regional role.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> See Keylor, 479-492; and Schulzinger, 380-381.

<sup>231</sup> See Keylor, 479-492; and Schulzinger, 380-381.

Paradoxically, U.S. military withdrawal from the region occurred while many aspiring regional powers purchased modern military hardware from the United States, Europe, and Russia. Kim Il Sung's determination to make North Korea a nuclear power remained the primary security concern in the region until 1994, when his son and successor Kim Jung Il agreed to halt North Korea's nuclear weapons development program in exchange for two light water reactors. Amidst this economic and military growth, Asia struggled to develop any semblance of collective security in the region, evidenced by the failure of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to make an effective contribution to the settlement of civil war in Cambodia. Only realist political pressure on Vietnam from both China and the United States permitted a United Nations led solution to the Cambodian conflict.<sup>232</sup>

Non-communist legacy institutions from the Cold War, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) sought to extend their global influence and spawn economic interdependence. The Uruguay Round of the GATT negotiations lasted into the 1990's as various protectionist measures—like Europe's Common Agricultural Program and Japan's high tariffs and quotas—were challenged by advocates of freer trade, principally the United States. The emergence of regional trading blocks like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the EU potentially pose a significant challenge to global free trade endorsed by an emboldened GATT turned World Trade Organization (WTO) in the

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<sup>232</sup> See Kaylor, 479-492; and Schulzinger, 380-381.

mid-1990's.<sup>233</sup> Even if free trade reigns uninhibited by protectionism, it is no guarantee for conflict prevention. For instance, pre-WWI Europe experienced a time of great economic interdependence just prior to the outbreak of a Europe-wide war.<sup>234</sup> Finally, Asian economic growth does not necessarily foreshadow peaceful relations.<sup>235</sup> Free trade and global economic development may create more differences than consensus.

## C. SINO-SOVIET ALIGNMENT

### 1. System Structure

The dissolution of the Soviet Union, the further integration of Europe, and the development of Asia initially led to a post Cold War euphoria embracing a "new world order." President George Bush—in strict Wilsonian language—stated in 1991:

We have a vision of a new partnership of nations that transcends the Cold War. A Partnership based on consultation, cooperation, and collective action, especially through international and regional organizations.<sup>236</sup>

This initial impetus to overcome geopolitical realities barely survived President Bush's tenure in office: European integration gave way to inaction; Russia experienced political, military, and economic turmoil; and Asian economic development lacked comparable

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<sup>233</sup> Keylor, 527-530.

<sup>234</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990), reprinted in *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, Expanded Edition. Sean M. Lynn Jones and Steven E. Miller, ed., (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1997), 152.

<sup>235</sup> Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17, No. 4 (Spring 1993), reprinted in *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, Expanded Edition. Sean M. Lynn Jones and Steven E. Miller, ed. (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1997), 265.

<sup>236</sup> Kissinger, 804.

security institutions. Anarchy and the security dilemma began to influence perceptions of national interest, precluding premature judgment on the sanctity of a "new world order" or even the composition of the new international system: In a draft military doctrine released in October 1999, the Russian Federation recognizing the "diminished effectiveness of existing machinery for ensuring international security, above all the United Nations and the OSCE," highlighted prevalent, negative perceptions of global cooperation.<sup>237</sup> Great debating occurred addressing the polarity and power composition of the international system following the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>238</sup> An examination of domestic factors, common and competing interests, and system structure influencing Sino-Russian post-Cold War relations will therefore permit generalizations about the polarity of the international system and the resulting behavior of states.<sup>239</sup>

## **2. Unit Handicaps**

Since the end of the Cold War, the topic of a "strategic partnership" between Russia and China at times dominated their respective political rhetoric. If the current international system is multipolar, then Sino-Russian rapprochement is expected to be molded by unit level factors. According to Kissinger, "The absence of both an overriding ideological or strategic threat frees nations to pursue foreign policies based increasingly

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<sup>237</sup> Russian Federation Draft Military Doctrine, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, in Russian, 09 October 1999. FBIS translated text.

<sup>238</sup> See Chapter I, p. 1-2 for a brief summary of competing descriptions of the international system.

<sup>239</sup> Chapter II developed three multipolar and two bipolar propositions for alignment and alliance behavior that were subsequently confirmed in Chapters III and IV, respectively. The main two propositions from those chapters will be tested in this chapter.

on their immediate national interest.”<sup>240</sup> This section will examine the domestic level attributes influencing Sino-Russian cooperation using the multipolar proposition confirmed in Chapter III: in a multipolar system, alliances are based on unit level attributes.

Russia’s internal political and economic conditions remain disturbingly poor since Yeltsin’s rise to power at the end of 1991. Reform efforts to establish democratic rule of law waned as the Russian population resented economic shock therapy, creating internal power struggles between the federal government, regional republican governors, and new economic elites. Overall, eight out of ten farmers in Russia are going bankrupt, industrial production has fallen by half, and health care and education are in disarray.<sup>241</sup> World Bank economic statistics indicate Russian Federation GDP fell from \$337.9 billion to \$276.6 billion between 1995 and 1998, and 4.3 percent average annual decline.<sup>242</sup>

The loans for shares economic reform plan encouraged by the West created a few wealthy Russian private businessmen while most citizens received worthless partial ownership of industries destined to fail. These oligarchs’ profits were not re-invested in infrastructure. Instead, “capitalism became capital flight,” impoverishing whole regions of Russia. Wayne Merry, Chief Political Analyst at Embassy Moscow between 1990 and 1994 claims: “we created a virtual open shop of thievery,” favoring economic changes

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<sup>240</sup> Kissinger, 805.

<sup>241</sup> Sherry Jones, “Return of the Czar,” PBS television documentary, 9 May 2000 [script online]; Available from <http://www.pbs.org>; Internet; accessed 03 June 2000.

<sup>242</sup> World Bank, *World Development Indicators Database*, July 2000 [database online]; Available from <http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata>; Internet, Accessed 10 November 2000.

without substantial enough political reform. Merry further argues the United States encouraged “unfettered, unregulated capitalism,” hoping that “rule of law, civil society, and representative democracy” would automatically follow. After Russia devalued the ruble in August 1998 and defaulted on \$40 billion of foreign debt, unlimited western support for Russia retracted while many Russians “concluded the West achieved what it wanted, which was the weakening of the Russian state.”<sup>243</sup> Throughout the 1990’s, Russian remained focused internally or on the near abroad as economic collapse and increasing reservations about western intentions pushed Russia, desperate for hard currency, further from Europe.

Public support for Vladimir Putin’s as President Yeltsin’s successor emanated from Russia’s success in Chechnya while Putin was prime minister. Simultaneous criticism of Chechnya and military intervention in Kosovo by the West caused Russian public opinion towards the United States to plummet, contributing to nationalist parliamentary victories in the December 1999 Duma elections.<sup>244</sup> The military gained influence over Russian foreign policy after perceived successes in Chechnya and the pre-emptive occupation of the Pristina airport in Kosovo, although recently President Putin moved to control foreign policy closer following his election victory in March 2000.<sup>245</sup> Russian foreign policy ambitions remain tempered by domestic constraints, causing

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<sup>243</sup> Sherry Jones, “Return of the Czar.”

<sup>244</sup> Alexander Pikayev, “The Prospects for ABM Treaty Modification,” Program on New Approaches to Russian Security, February 2000 [memorandum online]; Available from <http://fas-www.harvard.edu/>; Internet, accessed 11 Nov 2000.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

Russian weakness and instability in the former Soviet Union to pose a more serious challenge to the West than any chance of Russia's successful reconstitution as a great power.<sup>246</sup>

Conversely, the 1990's marked a period of sustained economic growth for China. Its GDP increased at an annual rate of 9 percent from 1995 to 1998, climbing from \$700.2 billion to \$946.3 billion.<sup>247</sup> China's greatest vulnerability, despite security concerns throughout East Asia, remains the Communist regime's survival, which depends on continual economic growth and repression of domestic political ferment persisting after Tiannamen Square.<sup>248</sup> China successfully negotiated a transfer of power within the Party through the middle 1990's, but faces another significant transition by the year 2002 when President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji are expected to relinquish their positions at the next Communist Party's Congress.<sup>249</sup> Chinese foreign policy became emboldened during Jiang's consolidation of power, and may do so again over Taiwan, territorial claims, and U.S.-Japan relations during the coming transition to a fourth generation of leaders.<sup>250</sup> Rural unrest, economic failure, increased corruption, and reform minded fifth generation leaders could challenge the power transition, ushering in

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<sup>246</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, "A Nation in Search of its Place." *Current History* (October 1999): 328-333.

<sup>247</sup> World Bank. *World Development Indicators Database*.

<sup>248</sup> Peter W. Rodman, "Broken Triangle: China, Russia, and America after 25 Years." *The Nixon Center*, 1997. Monograph online. Available from <http://www.nixoncenter.org>; Internet, Accessed 30 October 2000.

<sup>249</sup> Jiang is expected to stay on as chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission like Deng did when breeding Jiang as his successor from "China's Dynastic Struggle," *The Economist*. 28 October 2000, 12.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.



more nationalistic, anti-western sentiment in foreign policy aimed at generating public support and cohesion for the regime.<sup>251</sup>

### **3. Interests and Strength Inequalities**

Both structural and domestic factors determine the common and competing interests and strength relationship between two countries. Chinese and Russian political instability, concern for economic growth, and military development combine with the distribution of power in the international system to present a template of security challenges and interests between the two states. This section will examine economic, military, and territorial common and competing interests and relative strength inequalities between Russia and China in an effort to explain the breadth, depth, and patterns of their alleged, emerging "strategic partnership."

Common economic interests support Sino-Russian cooperation. Sino-Russian economic ties permit the introduction of inexpensive Chinese goods to the Russian Far East, alleviating the shock of Soviet subsidy withdrawal; provide an outlet for growing Chinese trade and labor; establish efficient local authority contact and contract for goods; create a Russian economic assistance outlet to hedge against the loss of western aid; and allow internal regions of China to participate in opening trade to outside countries.<sup>252</sup> China's trade with Central Asia has grown from \$463 million to \$872 million between 1992 and 1997, offering a critical outlet to East Asian economies for the Central Asian

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<sup>251</sup> "Ready for the Fourth Generation," *The Economist*. 28 October 2000, 40.

<sup>252</sup> Thomas E. Stewart, "Russia and China: A Historical Perspective of the Prospects for Alliance," M.A. Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 1997, 139-144.

republics.<sup>253</sup> Additionally, Russia and China have a shared interest in the sustained economic growth and efficient utilization of the energy and raw material resources in the Central Asian region.<sup>254</sup> Total Sino-Russian bilateral trade reached \$6 billion in 1999, including technology trade contracts worth \$1.5 billion and a nuclear power plant in China's Jiangsu Province valued at \$3.2 billion; China is now Russia's third biggest export market behind the United States and Germany, while Russia absorbs only 5 percent of China's exports.<sup>255</sup>

Despite common interests in establishing a closer regional trade relationship, China and Russia also have conflicting economic interests. Russia accuses China of dumping poor quality goods onto Russian consumers. Russia historically has a marginal economic presence in East Asia. China prefers western trade. Current trade centers almost exclusively on exchanges of Russian high-tech weapons for Chinese low-tech consumer goods. High transportation costs between Russian manufacturing centers and Chinese markets also inhibits establishing a deeper economic component to any Sino-Russian strategic partnership.<sup>256</sup> When Chinese traders overstay their visas in Far Eastern Russia and inundate Russian markets with low quality goods, Russia fears

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<sup>253</sup> Shiping Tang, "Economic Integration in Central Asia," *Asian Survey* XL, No. 2 (March/April 2000): 370.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 370.

<sup>255</sup> Bin Yu, "Back to the Future," *Comparative Connections: An E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 1999 [journal online]; Available from <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/994Qchina-rus.html>; Internet, Accessed 30 October 2000.

<sup>256</sup> Stewart, 144-149.

Chinese demographic and economic expansion.<sup>257</sup> Russia potentially stands to lose its former political dominance in the Central Asian region by further cooperating on economic integration with China, undermining enhanced cooperation and breeding mutual suspicion between the two nations.<sup>258</sup> Russian and Chinese common and competing economic interests do not support a strengthening strategic partnership and alignment.

China currently receives roughly 40 percent of Russia's military exports, importing advanced weaponry to support its military doctrine, which stresses mobility, force projection, and the lethality of modern weapons systems in anticipation of local and limited wars in the region.<sup>259</sup> Russia has delivered the following modern equipment to China: 72 Su-27's with a production contract for 200 more; 4 Tu-26 long range bombers; 70 improved T-72 tanks; 4 Kilo-class diesel submarines with provisions for 6 more; 8 S-300 SAM systems capable of marginal anti-cruise missile defense; and 2 Sovremenny-class destroyers armed with SS-N-22 Sunburn (Moskit) anti-ship missiles originally designed to target U.S. naval assets.<sup>260</sup> Major Russian arms transfers to China between 1992 and 1999 totaled over \$9 billion.<sup>261</sup> Russian arms trade represented 2.6 percent of

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<sup>257</sup> Shiping Tang, "Economic Integration in Central Asia," 362.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 374.

<sup>259</sup> Stephen J Blank, "The Dynamics of Russian Weapons Sales to China," Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 04 March 1997 [Paper online]; Available from <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usassi/welcome.htm>; Internet, Accessed 15 July 2000.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Bin Yu, "Coping With the Post-Kosovo Fallout," *Comparative Connections: An E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 1999 [journal online]; Available from <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/993Qchina-rus.html>; Internet, Accessed 30 October 2000.

its exports in 1997, a seemingly small percentage until compared to other major arms exporting nations.<sup>262</sup>

China and Russia have substantial common interests in furthering military trade. The relatively inexpensive Russian weapons provide China the chance to acquire directly modern weaponry, forgoing high indigenous developmental costs while downsizing and modernizing the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Many Russian systems are interoperable with Chinese reverse-engineered facsimiles, facilitating China's move towards combined arms operations. In Russia, tight federal budget restrictions prevent delivery of new equipment to the military; Russia perceives that selling new equipment to China is the only feasible way to keep the Military Industrial Complex (MIC) functioning while earning hard currency the government desperately needs.<sup>263</sup> To ensure its survival, the Russian MIC has gone so far as to negotiate contracts with China without Russian governmental approval; these permissive sales yield Russia limited cash while China registers significant material gain.<sup>264</sup> According to one Chinese official, military arms sales provide the "glue" of the Sino-Russian partnership.<sup>265</sup>

Despite short term common interests in arms sales, China and Russia have underlying competing interests in further exchanges of weaponry: The Russian surplus of available weapons will dwindle over time; China increasingly seeks technology with

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<sup>262</sup> Other significant arms exporters in 1997 included Israel (1.6 percent), France (2.0 percent), Britain (2.3 percent) and the United States (4.6 percent), compared to the world arms export average of 1.0 percent of exports; from World Bank, *World Development Indicators Database*.

<sup>263</sup> Stewart, 63-70.

<sup>264</sup> Blank, "The Dynamics of Russian Weapons Sales to China."

which western firms have a comparative advantage; China seeks to establish a diversity of arms providers (Germany, Israel, and Sweden); Russia continues to broaden its customer base among potential Chinese regional adversaries (India, Iran, Malaysia and Vietnam); Russian suspects inequity and mal-intent in China's arms purchases; China and Russia inherit historical military enmity; and both countries may emerge as arms-export competitors in the near future.<sup>266</sup> Continued exports to China will hinder the reform of Russia's MIC and create a rival arms exporter in Far East.<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, the wholesale transfer of Russian arms to China is not isolated or unprecedented in Russian behavior. Russian sales since the end of the Cold War have reached India, Iran, Hungary, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, South Korea, Slovakia, Kazakstan, Vietnam and Algeria.<sup>268</sup> Russian overtures to Vietnam, India, Japan, and Taiwan indicate Russia is motivated by MIC survival and hard currency domestic needs, not an overarching strategic relationship with China.

Territorial relations are another critical source of common and competing interests providing insight into a possible Sino-Russian strategic partnership. The Sino-Soviet border, dominated by territorial disputes for over 150 years, represented the longest militarized border in the world during the Cold War.<sup>269</sup> Historically, the balance of power between Russia and China governed their border relationship. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century,

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<sup>265</sup> Garnett, "A Nation in Search of its Place," 331.

<sup>266</sup> Stewart, 71-76.

<sup>267</sup> Blank, "The Dynamics of Russian Weapons Sales to China."

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> S.M.C. Paine, *Imperial Rivals* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 1.

as Russia fell further behind Western Europe economically, relative Chinese weakness in the East afforded Russia the opportunity for geopolitical gains through diplomatic leverage.<sup>270</sup> This Russian geopolitical advantage did not alter until after the communists unified China in 1949.<sup>271</sup> Following the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Union and Mutual Assistance in 1950, the border regimes maintained active ties and pursued cultural and commercial contacts over particular border conflicts in the interest of greater ideological and geo-strategic considerations.<sup>272</sup> Relations stalled in the 1960's as the border became militarized during the Sino-Soviet split. Negotiations did not become constructive again until Gorbachev ushered in reforms in the 1980's.<sup>273</sup>

There is evidence China and Russia perceive common interests in conciliatory border relations: constant bilateral exchanges concerning military notification procedures and observer missions take place; mutual concern over separatist movements in the region exists; migration control and surveying work are done jointly; cross border commerce continues to grow; and there is little evidence of intentions to modify or abrogate aspects of the treaty among Chinese or Russian leaders.<sup>274</sup> Lowering Sino-Russian border animosity contains mutual benefits of reduced military threats, enormous

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>272</sup> Alexei D. Voskressenski, *The Difficult Border* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1996), 88-89.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>274</sup> Stewart, 186-188.

cost savings from troop reductions, and improved trade relations between the two countries.<sup>275</sup>

To date, however, border arrangements between China and Russia fail to address the final one-tenth of the border—likely containing intractable disputes—not covered by the current border treaty. Putin and Jiang also continue to struggle with regional and military concerns about territorial questions. Moreover, Chinese migration into the Russian Far East continues to undermine Russian public support for the border arrangement.<sup>276</sup> Historical territorial enmity and Russian fear of Chinese economic ambitions in Russia's Far East likely will undermine any long-term cooperation or enduring strategic partnership.<sup>277</sup>

Sino-Russian common and competing interests do not indicate the emergence of an enduring, deep strategic partnership, despite Russian and Chinese rhetoric to the contrary. Domestic, short-term, interests explain current cooperation in the Far East but do not lead to an emerging alliance. In the long term, the Russians perceive the border as a thin line between a sparsely populated, mineral rich expanse of Russian territory and a growing, heavily populated China.<sup>278</sup> Their current short-term cooperation allows Russia to minimize the military and financial burden of ensuring stability on its Chinese

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<sup>275</sup> Stewart, 15.

<sup>276</sup> Stewart, 188-194.

<sup>277</sup> Shiping Tang, "Economic Integration in Central Asia," 365.

<sup>278</sup> Voskressenski, 96.

and Central Asian borders while permitting China to demonstrate alliance alternatives to the West through improved relations with Russia.<sup>279</sup>

In addition to common and competing interests, system structure and domestic factors create strength inequalities that affect the relations between states. The current status of military forces in both China and Russia influence their perceptions of security and their relative bargaining position. Russia's military power has eroded immensely since the Gorbachev initiated reforms of the late 1980's. Despite a critical need to reform and modernize its forces towards new threats, Russia failed to complete any significant military reform between 1992 and 1997 because change proved too expensive. Alexei Arbatov, the deputy chairman of the Committee on Defense of the Duma, predicts that by 2005 Russian forces will be comprised of 1,000 to 1,500 combat and transport aircraft, 15 to 17 heavy divisions, two to three light divisions, 70 to 80 large surface combatants, 40 to 50 attack submarines, 1,300 to 1500 strategic nuclear warheads, and less than one million personnel.<sup>280</sup> Russia's 1999 Draft Military Doctrine reads more pessimistically than the 1993 version in terms of threats and dangers, highlighting the Russian perception of military weakness and potential hostile intentions of the United States and NATO allies.<sup>281</sup> As a result, Russia intends to rely more on nuclear deterrence, permitting

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>280</sup> Alexei Arbatov, "Military Reform in Russia: Dilemmas, Obstacles and Prospects," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Spring 1998), 86-87, Cited in Thomas E. Wagner. Potential Russian Nuclear Contingencies in the Caucasus: Implications for NATO. M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000.

<sup>281</sup> Russian Federation Draft Military Doctrine, Krasnaya Zvezda, in Russian, 09 October 1999. FBIS translated text.



nuclear first-use to overcome current conventional military weaknesses.<sup>282</sup> Even if Russia could manage yearly military budget increases of 5 percent from now until 2020, it would merely bring the military back to 1992 spending levels.<sup>283</sup>

Whereas Russian military power remains on the decline, China continues to modernize and strengthen its military in anticipation of a more assertive regional foreign policy and increased threats from abroad. Current widespread arms sales from Russia to China will likely lead to military superiority for China vis-à-vis Russia in East Asia, with the short-term exception of Russia's numerical superiority in nuclear weapons. Russian and Chinese reports indicate that by 2010, China's tank and missile troops, air force and navy will be modernized by world standards. Russia's continual push towards collective regional security arrangements compared to China's preference for bilateral ties highlight the changing balance of forces between the two countries. Russia attempts to hedge against Chinese power by co-opting China into regional security arrangements.<sup>284</sup> China's continuing economic and military expansion worries Moscow as its economic crisis deepens, its military might is weakened, and the population leaves Siberia.<sup>285</sup>

Demographics play a role in the shifting balance of power between China and Russia in the Far East. Between 1995 and 1998, Russia's population crawled lower to 146.9 million people, undermined by a low fertility rate of 1.2 births per woman. China,

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Garnett, "A Nation in Search of its Place," 328.

<sup>284</sup> Blank, "The Dynamics of Russian Weapons Sales to China."

conversely, with a replacement level fertility rate of 1.9 births per woman, boasts a population of 1.2 billion people.<sup>286</sup> In 1999, China ranked first globally in total population ahead of India (997.5 million), the United States (272.9 million), Indonesia (207.0 million) and Brazil (168.1 million).<sup>287</sup> By 2030, China and India are both predicted to have 1.4 billion people, whereas the United States will increase to 327 million and Russia will decrease to 129 million.<sup>288</sup> China's immensely larger population will continue to exert pressure on the Russian Far East, creating tension and uncertainty in any long-term partnership.

The economic balance of power is also shifting in China's favor. China's rapidly growing economy of \$991.2 billion in 1999, representing almost half the \$1.9 trillion economy in the East Asia and Pacific region, dwarfs Russia's \$375.3 billion market.<sup>289</sup> Furthermore, China's economy now ranks seventh globally, indicating it is poised to become not only a regional power, but a global power as well.<sup>290</sup> President Yeltsin's visit to China in search of economic support at the end of 1999 contrasted sharply with

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<sup>285</sup> Alexei Arbatov, "Foreign Policy Consensus in Russia. Unipolar World Under U.S. Auspices Is Unacceptable to Moscow," *Moscow Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, in Russian, 14 March 1997, FBIS-SOV-97-051, 14 March 1997.

<sup>286</sup> World Bank. *World Development Indicators Database*.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> The 1.9 trillion total for the East Asian and Pacific Economy does not include Russia's (\$375.3 billion) and Japan's (\$4.4 trillion) economies; from World Bank, *World Development Indicators Database*.

<sup>290</sup> As of 1999, the top six global economies were the United States (\$8.7 trillion), Japan (\$4.4 trillion), Germany (\$2.1 trillion), France (\$1.4 trillion), Britain (\$1.4 trillion) and Italy (\$1.2 trillion); from World Bank, *World Development Indicators Database*.

Mao's trip to the Soviet Union fifty years earlier in search of financial assistance.<sup>291</sup> China has assumed the top position in the East Asian balance of power, with Russia dependent on Chinese goodwill now. Russians worry that their resource rich Siberian and Far Eastern region could come under the sway of an increasingly powerful China.<sup>292</sup> Whereas China is now Russia's third biggest export market behind the United States and Germany, Russia merely absorbs 5 percent of China's exports, highlighting the economic imbalance between the two countries.<sup>293</sup>

Common and competing interests and strength inequalities do not fully explain Chinese and Russian cooperation in military, economic, and territorial arrangements. Both countries are currently serving short-term domestic interests while ignoring other pertinent interests, with China gaining in the long term as it emerges as a pre-eminent power in the region.<sup>294</sup> If unit attributes do not support an emerging strategic partnership between China and Russia, a closer look at their relations to the United States may offer evidence that system structure pushes China and Russia together.

#### **4. Re-examining System Structure**

Lord Thomas Sanderson's description of international perceptions of the British Empire in 1907 may similarly describe anti-American attitudes at the close of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

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<sup>291</sup> Cheng, Li. "China in 1999." *Asian Survey* 40, No. 1 (January/February 2000): 128.

<sup>292</sup> Garnett, "A Nation in Search of its Place," 331.

<sup>293</sup> Bin Yu, "Back to the Future."

<sup>294</sup> S.M.C. Paine, 358.

It has sometimes seemed to me that to a foreigner...the British Empire must appear in the light of some huge giant sprawling over the globe, with gouty fingers and toes stretching in every direction, which cannot be approached without eliciting a scream.<sup>295</sup>

Both France in 1660 and Great Britain in 1860 were as dominant in the international system as the United States is today, although neither nation's dominance survived longer than fifty years.<sup>296</sup> This section will examine the effect that U.S. foreign policy, NATO expansion, Kosovo operations, U.S. security ties in Asia, and U.S. pursuit of Theatre Missile Defense (TMD) and National Missile Defense (NMD) have on Russian and Chinese alignment behavior.

The U.S. National Security Strategy published in October 1999 stated three principal goals: "to enhance America's security, to bolster America's economic prosperity, and to promote democracy and human rights abroad."<sup>297</sup> In that document, the United States boasted about the very accomplishments other nations question:

America has done much over the last seven years to build a better world: aiding the remarkable transitions to free-market democracy in Eastern Europe; adapting and enlarging NATO to strengthen Europe's security; ending ethnic war in Bosnia and Kosovo...standing up to threats posed by Saddam Hussein...benefiting our economy by reaching over 270 free trade agreements...<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," 253.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>297</sup> The White House. "A National Security Strategy For a New Century," December 1999 [document online]; Available from <http://www.pub.whitehouse.gov/>; Internet, Accessed 11 November 2000, iii.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., iv.

Moreover, the United States readily admitted, "the spread of democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law not only reflects American values, it also advances both our national security and prosperity."<sup>299</sup> These major objectives, interests, and foreign policy accomplishments serve as cannon fodder for anti-American criticism, specifically emanating from Russia and China. These two nations are dependent on U.S. goodwill for their prosperity but increasingly suspicious of U.S. intentions.

Russian perceptions of the United States have continually soured since the failed economic reforms encouraged by the Clinton administration during its first term impoverished the Russian population. The declared strategic partnership between Russia and the United States from the Gorbachev-Bush years gave way to ambivalence and animosity through the 1990's, culminating with the devaluation of the ruble in 1998. Strobe Talbot, testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations in April 2000, argued the new U.S. policy towards Russia "is one of advocacy and advancement of our own bottom-line strategic objectives and interests."<sup>300</sup> Alexei Arbatov illustrates the Russian perspective, claiming that "having relations with the United States from a position of weakness in the post-Cold War period is even worse than during the era of

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>300</sup> U.S. Congress. Senate. Senate Appropriations Committee. Subcommittee on Foreign Operations. "Pursuing U.S. Interests with Russia and with President-Elect Putin," Testimony by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, 106<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., 4 April 2000; Available from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/yeltsin/putin/>; Internet; accessed 10 Nov 2000.

confrontation,” further adding the “West’s current policy on Russia boils down to the arrogance of strength.”<sup>301</sup>

NATO’s response to the post-Cold War security environment through membership expansion and mission modification exacerbated Russian threat perceptions and encouraged Russia to seek partnerships in Asia, not in Europe. In 1999, NATO admitted the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland and released a new Strategic Concept following the Washington Summit in April, broadening and redefining NATO’s role so the organization “not only ensures the defense of its members but contributes to peace and stability in the region.”<sup>302</sup> From Russia’s viewpoint, these changes represented an overly ambitious mandate for a formerly defensive alliance. Russia further believes the United States violated an implicit agreement not to expand NATO after Russia acquiesced to German unification in 1990. Russia resents the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) arrangement since it gives Russia the same status as other Eastern European states, although the creation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) between NATO and Russia attempted to mitigate those sentiments.<sup>303</sup> Prior to NATO expansion, Marshall Sergeyev, Russian Minister of Defense, argued any new European security architecture

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<sup>301</sup> Alexei Arbatov, “Foreign Policy Consensus in Russia. Unipolar World Under U.S. Auspices Is Unacceptable to Moscow.”

<sup>302</sup> “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept,” Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. on 23 and 24 April 1999, [document online]; Available from <http://www.nato.int>; Internet, accessed 02 November 2000.

<sup>303</sup> Thomas E. Wagner, “Potential Russian Nuclear Contingencies in the Caucasus: Implications for NATO,” M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000, 70-71.

should be based on the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), not the U.S. dominated NATO, since the OSCE encompasses a broader membership.<sup>304</sup>

Russian and Chinese anti-NATO rhetoric intensified after the United States circumvented the UNSC, using overwhelming force in a non-article Five NATO operation in Kosovo. Alexei Arbatov, in an informal address to students at the Naval Postgraduate School, claimed Russia perceived the Kosovo operation as an “armed unprovoked attack in direct violation of international law,” relieving Russia of any Chechnya complex and indicating legal grounds and humanitarian interests are secondary to U.S. national interest. NATO’s actions prompted Russia to withhold participation in the PJC and the PfP, finally consenting to a regular meeting of the PJC in March 2000.<sup>305</sup> Unilateral NATO action created four related shifts in Sino-Russian diplomacy: a shift from economic cooperation to strategic coordination; a shift from routine talks to continual crisis consultation; a movement from symbolic ties “not to affect any third party” to cooperation against the United States; and symbolic, yet significant shifts away from the United States.<sup>306</sup> NATO enlargement, the circumvention of international law in the Kosovo operation and interference in Russia’s perceived sphere of influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia created these anti-American perceptions.<sup>307</sup> Russia’s recent

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<sup>304</sup> Marshall Igor Sergeyev, “We Are Not Adversaries, We Are Partners,” *NATO Review* 46, No.1 (Spring 1998): 15-18.

<sup>305</sup> Wagner, 72-73.

<sup>306</sup> Bin Yu, “NATO’s Unintended Consequence,” *Comparative Connections: An E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, 1999 [journal online]; Available from <http://www.csis.org/>; Internet, Accessed 30 October 2000.

<sup>307</sup> C.J. Dick, “Russia’s 1999 Draft Military Doctrine,” Conflict Studies Research Centre (November 1999) [draft paper online]; Available from <http://www.ppc.pims.org/>; Internet, accessed 05 January 2000.

efforts to increase military spending and accelerate arms transfers to China run counter to Russia's true domestic security and economic interests, highlighting the influence of system structure on Sino-Russian cooperation: The perception of overwhelming and unmatched U.S. power globally induced deeper strategic cooperation between China and Russia than their respective domestic interests warranted.

The 1999 National Security Strategy also delineated U.S. interests and intentions in East Asia, linking "security interests with economic growth and our commitment to democracy and human rights" and re-igniting U.S. domestic debate on U.S.-China trade relations and Chinese internal political repressions.<sup>308</sup> It also reconfirmed that the U.S.-Japan security alliance serves as the anchor of continued bilateral treaty alliances with the Republic of Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia.<sup>309</sup> Furthermore, the strategy suggested that the revised guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation created more effective and credible cooperation "in the event of an armed attack on Japan, and in situations in areas surrounding Japan," falling just short of directing the alliance against a third country (read China).<sup>310</sup> More reassuring to China, the strategy reaffirms U.S. intentions for "enhancing stability in the Taiwan Straits through maintenance of our 'one China' policy."<sup>311</sup> In 1999, U.S. relations with China became unsettled over a slow U.S. response to the crisis in East Timor, reports of Chinese espionage by the congressionally mandated Cox Commission, allegations of illegal Chinese contributions to the 1996

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<sup>308</sup> The White House. "A National Security Strategy For a New Century," 34.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 34.



presidential election, and the accidental bombing of the Chinese embassy in the Kosovo campaign.<sup>312</sup>

Russia's reaction to increased U.S. security ties in East Asia has been varied: Russia's initial push towards strategic partnership with China during the 1990's gave way to increased bilateral ties with countries like Japan, South Korea, and India but intensified with China following heightened U.S. rhetoric in Asia and action in Europe.<sup>313</sup> Additionally, despite flagrant displays of U.S. power in 1999, both China and Russia recognize the overall importance of cordial relations with the United States based on economic interests.<sup>314</sup> Despite strong anti-western sentiment throughout China in early 1999, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji still traveled to Washington in April, only to have his concessions for China's entry into the WTO initially rejected by President Clinton.<sup>315</sup> The Chinese government asserted the precision bombing of the Chinese embassy must have been intentional, concluding overwhelming U.S. power and disregard for foreign interests in Asia creates an acute security dilemma for all states in the region.<sup>316</sup>

U.S. overtures towards modifying the ABM Treaty and pursuing both TMD in Asia and NMD at home intensified Russian and Chinese strategic uncertainties, encouraging closer Sino-Russian collaboration. The United States argues it needs to

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<sup>311</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>312</sup> Douglas H. Paal, "The United States in Asia in 1999," *Asian Survey* 40, No. 1 (January/February 2000): 3-4.

<sup>313</sup> James Clay Moltz, "Russia in Asia in 1997," *Asian Survey* 38, No. 1 (January 1998): 91-106.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 91-106.

<sup>315</sup> Paal, "The United States in Asia in 1999," 3-4.

pursue modification of the ABM treaty to “allow for the development of a national missile defense against potential rogue state attacks.”<sup>317</sup> China and Russia strongly resist U.S. efforts to develop a credible NMD because it would drastically alter the strategic nuclear balance of power.

Official Russian policy statements specifically call for the “preservation and strengthening of the 1972 ABM Treaty.”<sup>318</sup> Russia opposes modifying the treaty because of strategic security concerns, internal political divisions on arms control, and uncertainty over the U.S. promise to employ a limited missile defense against rogue threats only. China’s \$10 billion package to enhance its nuclear forces threatens Russia and the current balance of power between those two states. The current asymmetric power relationship between Moscow and Washington leaves Russia with few means to deter U.S. abrogation of the treaty. Recognizing its inherently weak bargaining position, Russia recently acted to maintain higher force levels to counter potential NMD by purchasing eight Tu-160 Blackjack and three Tu-95 MS Bear bombers from Ukraine.<sup>319</sup> Despite economic incentives to continue modernizing and downsizing their military forces, the potential for NMD to alter the strategic balance of power provides structural incentive for Russia and China to increase their nuclear arsenals.

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>317</sup> The White House. “A National Security Strategy For a New Century,” 34.

<sup>318</sup> Russian Federation Draft Military Doctrine, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, in Russian, 09 October 1999. FBIS translated text.

<sup>319</sup> Pikayev, “The Prospects for ABM Treaty Modification.”

A December 1999 summit between President Yeltsin and President Jiang cemented their mutual opposition to the United States, issuing a joint communiqué condemning U.S. efforts to amend the ABM Treaty. The visit attempted to “push forward our strategic partnership and be beneficial to global stability and a multipolar world,” according to Xia Yishen, a career Chinese diplomat. Others argue China and Russia were merely posturing at the summit because they still desperately need commercial ties with the United States.<sup>320</sup> The perceived negative momentum in international security and U.S. commitment to fight for values not interests alarms China and Russia. These patterns create potential U.S. opposition to Russian and Chinese interests in Chechnya, Taiwan, and Tibet, and threaten to undermine the strategic nuclear balance of power as well.<sup>321</sup>

There is ample evidence structural forces compel China and Russia to cooperate strategically despite contradictory domestic factors both encouraging and discouraging alignment. Sino-Russian perceptions and reactions to NATO enlargement, Kosovo operations, U.S. security ties in Asia, and U.S. efforts to deploy TMD and develop NMD indicate they react structurally when the U.S. employs its vast military, diplomatic, and economic power globally. If structure influences state behavior in the international system, this evidence appears to support the bipolar proposition confirmed in Chapter IV: in a bipolar system, alliances are based on structural factors.

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<sup>320</sup> “China, Russia Lay Basis for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership,” *Agence France Presse*, 10 December 1999 [article online]; Available from <http://www.insidechina.com/>; Internet, accessed 04 November 2000.

<sup>321</sup> Bin Yu, “Back to the Future.”

Current U.S. behavior, however, is not governed by structural factors. Whereas both Soviet and U.S. international activity was structurally induced during the bipolar Cold War, in the current international system U.S. action is based on domestic politics, economic interests, and security interests generated from unit attributes (values) vice strategic interests generated by system structure. For example, the evolution of U.S. China policy occurred amidst competing domestic perspectives on Taiwan rearmament and WTO admission for China, largely irrespective of the strategic implications of the policy decisions.<sup>322</sup> Therefore, alignment behavior in the current international system is not solely governed by either structural or domestic factors. U.S., Russian, and Chinese behavior is domestically generated, but when the United States exercises overwhelming power, system structure inhibits Russian and Chinese domestic preferences, inducing closer Sino-Russian partnership.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This chapter demonstrates neither the bipolar nor multipolar concept of alliance and alignment behavior applies in the current international system. Examining common and competing interests influencing the rumored Sino-Russian strategic partnership illustrates domestic factors alone cannot account for their current relationship, discounting a multipolar explanation of their rapprochement. Likewise, system structure, evidenced by strong Chinese and Russian reactions to the exercise of U.S. power globally, supports Sino-Russian cooperation, but fails to explain U.S. actions. The

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<sup>322</sup> Moltz, "Russia in Asia in 1997," 91-106.

continued influence of domestic considerations on U.S. behavior disproves a purely bipolar, structural explanation for current foreign policy decisions. Instead, the evidence presented in this chapter empirically supports a third international system: the unipolar moment.

Overwhelming U.S. military, economic, institutional, and diplomatic power creates an international system where U.S. action is dictated by domestic factors while lesser power behavior responds to structural stimuli. Current power relations represent an illusory hybrid of both multipolar and bipolar phenomenon as lesser powers forego domestic interests where and when the unipolar hegemon (France, Britain, and now the United States) decides to exercise its influence. When the U.S. heightens Russian and Chinese security concerns, they cooperate to increase their power despite their potential conflicts and particular interests residing in their domestic attributes. Both states rely on the United States for economic development, but they are forced to court one another, and other lesser powers (India), despite specific domestic interests to the contrary.

Aside from offering an understanding of alliance behavior in a unipolar system, this chapter also lends credence to the future application of realist theory to state behavior. Chinese and Russian perceptions since the end of the Cold War are exclusively stated in realist terms, consistently advocating a movement towards a "multipolar" system. As economic growth and military modernization spreads throughout East Asia, the realist propositions confirmed in these past three chapters will have direct application to geo-political jockeying in Asia. Russia, China, India, Germany, France, Japan, Britain and the United States are poised to assume global power roles. For now, a unipolar

model applies. If China's awesome economic growth and military modernization continues, a bipolar perspective on Sino-U.S. relations may prove explicable. And if multiple power sources obtain relative parity to the United States, the multipolar lessons of pre-WWII Europe will apply.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

This thesis used alliance theory to examine Russian foreign policy behavior and to address four critical questions emerging in the current international system: what is the polarity of the current system; who are the potential major powers; how will Russia behave; and what approach to international relations should the United States adopt? This thesis applied realist theory outlined in Glenn Snyder's book *Alliance Politics* to the international system to explore past Russian alliance behavior and to predict Russian patterns of alignment in the emerging international system. It developed multipolar and bipolar propositions for alliance formation, tested and validated these propositions with historical evidence on Russian alliance behavior, and applied these propositions to the current international system to test the utility of realist theory in the post-Cold War environment, and gain insight into Russia's current foreign policy disposition.

### **B. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Chapter III validated three multipolar propositions developed for alliance formation. First, the evidence available concerning the Hitler-Stalin Pact illustrated unit attributes and alliance handicaps influence alliance selection in a multipolar system. Second, structurally induced considerations of strength inequalities and strategic, general interests will dominate unit driven considerations when subsequent alliances and events intensify the level of the security dilemma internationally. By 1939, the collapse of collective security and the rise of German power gravely threatened the other European

powers. When a single nation (like Germany) or a coalition of nations threatens a multipolar system with overwhelming force, the system mimics a bipolar arrangement: major powers forego alliance handicaps in response to structural influences. Third, the consecutive selection of alliances created two coalitions of roughly equal strength, even though the Hitler-Stalin Pact momentarily shifted the balance of forces away from two stable coalitions of equal magnitude: Stalin's temporary conciliation towards Hitler permitted by 1941 an East-West coalition capable of overcoming German threats to the international system.

Chapter IV validated two bipolar propositions. First, the evidence concerning the emergence of superpower struggle and the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact illustrated structure dominates alliance behavior in a bipolar system. Since no coalition of lesser powers can challenge the security of either superpower, bipolar alliances form around superpower interests. Likewise, both superpowers are compelled to challenge attempts by the other to gain influence among the lesser powers despite any domestic handicaps inhibiting action. The United States rapidly overcame domestic isolationism to contain Soviet expansion. Stalin recognized geopolitical limits to Soviet expansion despite domestic expansionist and ideological impulses to the contrary. Second, the Soviets recognized spheres of influence and limited support of communist insurgency to states they could reasonably dominate based on geography, coercion, and finance. When a bipolar system exists, structure will dictate superpower alliance formation regardless of lesser power domestic interests.



Chapter V demonstrated that neither the bipolar nor multipolar concept of alliance and alignment behavior applies in the current international system. Examining the rumored Sino-Russian strategic partnership illustrated that domestic factors alone cannot account for their current relationship, discounting a multipolar explanation for their rapprochement. Likewise, system structure, evidenced by strong Chinese and Russian reactions to the exercise of U.S. power globally, supported Sino-Russian cooperation, but fails to explain U.S. actions. The importance and influence of domestic preferences on U.S. behavior discredits a purely bipolar, structural explanation for current international alignment. Instead, Chapter V offered a systemic model: the unipolar moment. Overwhelming U.S. military, economic, institutional, and diplomatic power creates an international system where U.S. action is dictated by domestic factors while lesser power behavior (China and Russia, for example) responds to structural stimuli. Current power relations represent an illusory hybrid of both multipolar and bipolar phenomenon as lesser powers forego domestic interests where and when the unipolar hegemon (France, Britain, and now the United States) decides to exercise its influence.

### **C. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY**

This thesis demonstrates realist theory remains a powerful, accurate methodology for understanding the behavior of states. Russia, despite a long period of communist rule and ideological posturing, behaved as predicted by realist-based proscriptions for alliance formation. Moreover, current rhetoric and behavior from emerging powers like Russia, China, India, and Japan all subscribe to realist perspectives. Because of its dominate liberal, Western, European affinity for collective security, value-based interests,

democracy, and human rights, the United States runs the risk of exacerbating vice solving its security problems by creating tension, uncertainty, and collaboration among potential regional rivals who increasingly subscribe to a realist perspective on international relations. At a minimum, since the United States cannot wholly distance itself from its domestic, valued-based interests, U.S. foreign policy architects must recognize that potential adversaries are more intent on security and regime survival than the advancement of individual rights and democratic freedoms. In the current unipolar moment, when micro-decisions in the United States have macro-affect globally, the stakes for the United States are even greater: It is imperative that new U.S. initiatives (like NATO expansion, NMD development) are pursued with full understanding of the likely response from regional powers. Deployment of TMD in East Asia will spawn further Sino-Russian arms cooperation and expenditures while additional NATO expansion will likely encourage further cooperation between Russia, China, India, Iran, and other potential powers capable of exerting influence in the European periphery. Since the unipolar moment will inevitably succumb to multipolarity, equitable and tempered bilateral initiatives with rising powers ought to replace the current U.S. tendency to codify its domestic, valued-based interests in spite of the geo-strategic consequences. The sooner the United States recognizes it will soon be one of many powers, the sooner it can engage in constructive, two-way initiatives with future adversaries to pre-empt the catastrophic affects a spiraling security dilemma can have.

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